Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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POLL RESULTS

How would you describe your level of understanding of federalization as it applies to labor in the CNMI?

Fully understand	28
Somewhat understand	20
Somewhat confused	35
Very confused	56

Sunday, March 21, 2010

INSIDE

Missouri-Bound

Thirteen students will represent the CNMI in the U.S.-wide National Forensic League competition.

Local...Page 7

Anti-War Rally

Thousands of protesters marched through the nation's capital Saturday to urge immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Nation...Page 15

Not A Penny

The elderly Texas billionaire who married Anna Nicole Smith in the last year of his life never intended to leave the former stripper any portion of his vast fortune.

Life & Style...Page 21

As amply documented in the Opinion of the Attorney General, the CNRA does not expressly or implicitly preempt local CNMI laws dealing with employment practices pursuant to the Commonwealth's authority over intrastate commerce and its police power. There is nothing in the language of the CNRA or its legislative history that suggest otherwise.

—Howard P. Willens, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's special legal counsel

'Omnibus immigration bill does not violate federal laws'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's special legal counsel, Howard P. Willens, has said that no federal law affects the CNMI Legislature's ability to enact the omnibus immigration bill that the House and the Senate passed on Friday during back-to-back sessions.

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» 'Employers who hire aliens without umbrella permit may be violating CNMI, US laws'

ON UMBRELLA PERMIT, AUTHORITY ISSUES

USCIS certain, but workers, employers still have final say

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The federal government is certain on its views on the umbrella permit and authority over nonresident workers, but that it is the ultimate decision of the workers and employers on who they believe and follow, according to Guam/CNMI U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services field office director Walter Haith.

"It's ultimately your decision. And I'm going to tell you we're right? Of course!" said Haith, drawing applause from over a hundred people who attended the forum arranged by the United Workers Movement-NMI at Kilili Pavilion on Saturday night.

At the forum, in which former Rep. Tina Sablan served as the moderator,

See USCIS on Page 4

Medicaid funds for CNMI will nearly triple in updated health care reform bill

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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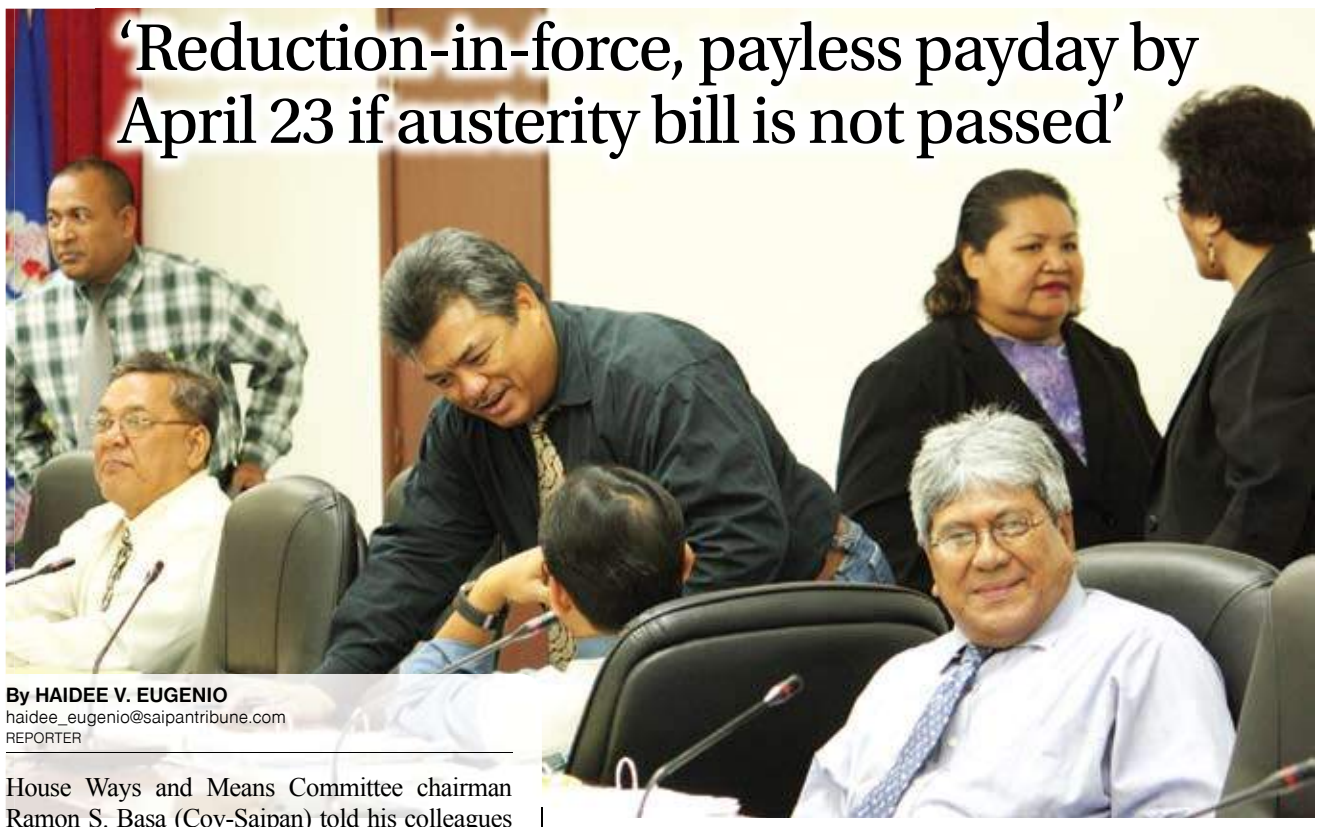
REPORTER

Sablan

Medicaid funding for the CNMI will nearly triple under terms of the 153-page H.R. 4872, the updated health care bill that the U.S. House of Representatives was scheduled to vote on in Washington, D.C. Sunday. This is the crucial bill that kept President Barack Obama from his March 22

See MEDICAID on Page 4

'Reduction-in-force, payless payday by April 23 if austerity bill is not passed'



By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

House Ways and Means Committee chairman Ramon S. Basa (Cov-Saipan) told his colleagues on Friday that passing his latest austerity bill will forestall not only payless paydays projected to start as early as April 23, 2010, but also a reduc-

See PAYLESS on Page 4

House Ways and Means Committee chair Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan), left-seated, looks on as other House members and Deputy Labor Secretary Cinta Kaipat, standing-second from right, confer during a break in Friday's session, wherein Basa's latest austerity bill was referred to his own committee.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Senators laud CNMI schools for taking part in Chamoru Language competition in Guam. PAGE 2

Defunct UIC, Lin's office raided for alleged tax evasion, false tax. **PAGE 5**

Mom's Kitchen

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Local

Judge finds Kaipat's reports on bonds issue conflicting

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has found conflicting reports as to whether the Department of Labor has admitted that it is responsible for enforcing labor bonds against insurance companies.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman pointed out Labor's conflicting reports in his order issued on Friday that denied a group of workers' motion for summary judgment.

Wiseman noted that in a report dated April 1, 2009, Labor Deputy Secretary Cinta Kaipat reported to the Legislature that "the Superior Court has ruled that we must treat these bonding defaults under the old Nonresident Worker Act, and we are taking steps right now to put into place a procedure to deal with this."

Wiseman said the plaintiffs represented by attorney Robert Myers assert that Kaipat's statement was an admission by Labor which shows that they are required to enforce labor bond surety claims.

However, on April 7, 2009, the judge pointed out, Kaipat explained in another letter responding to Wendy Doromal's Dec. 2008 report, that even though Labor was applying the former procedures under the Nonresident Worker Act, based on Superior Court associate judge Perry Inos' recent decisions, there was a practical problem with this practice since Labor had not authority to seize assets or revoke licenses with respect to bonding companies.

Wiseman said Kaipat went on to say that there was no way to ensure that workers could be paid even if the bonding company was solvent since only the courts can seize assets and only the Department of Commerce can revoke insurance licenses.

"This information was not only consistent with the 2009 Annual Report of the Department of Labor, but also with Ms. Kaipat's affidavit where she stated that the DOL was not responsible for enforcing labor bond surety obligations," the judge said.

Myers is counsel for 127 alien workers who sued Labor and some of its officials over the bonding issue.

Myers argued that their motion is proper since Labor has "now admitted that it is required to enforce the surety's obligation under the labor bonds in public documents or records."

Myers specifically claimed that Labor is mandated to enforce the surety's obligation under the labor bonds pursuant to the Nonresident Worker Act based on two decisions from the Superior Court.

Labor argued that it is not required by law to enforce plaintiffs' labor bonds against surety companies under either the old NWA nor are they required to enforce labor bonds under the current Commonwealth Employment Act of 2007.

In denying the workers' motion, Wiseman said there is still

See JUDGE on Page 4

CRAFTS FOR TOURISTS

Thelma Landeza, an employee of Micronesia Woodcraft Enterprises, sells local arts and crafts for tourists at the Last Command Post in Marpi. The Marianas Visitors Authority reported Wednesday that arrivals to the CNMI went up by 6 percent in February, from 35,594 to 37,850, largely due to strong showings from Korea and China.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Senators laud CNMI schools for taking part in Chamoru Language competition in Guam

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Senators presented on Thursday a resolution expressing appreciation to all CNMI students and schools that participated and won in the 7th Annual Chamoru Language Competition held at the University of Guam on March 19.

Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota), vice chair of the Senate Education Committee, Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan), and Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian) presented Senate Resolution 17-11 to principals of the participating CNMI schools, on behalf of the committee chaired by Sen. Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan).

The presentation was held at the Tanapag Head Start at 1pm on Thursday, with acting Education Commissioner Tim Thornburgh and school principals in attendance.

"We are proud and appreciative of the schools and students who participated in the competition," Taimanao told *Saipan Tribune*.

At least 11 schools from the CNMI took part in the competition: Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School; Tinian Elementary School; Kagman Elementary School; San Vicente Elementary School; Grace Christian Academy; Sinapalo Elementary School; Tinian Junior High and Senior High School; Marianas High School; San Antonio Elementary School; Rota Junior High School; and Rota High School.

Taimanao's S.R. 17-11, adopted on March 12, said that "the survival of Chamoru culture depends on the young generation knowing and appreciating the past, the sacrifices made by our ancestors, the beauty, accomplishments and suffering of our people."

With the number of young people who know and understand Chamoru culture, dance, music, drama, poetry and story telling continuing to fall, the three-page resolution lauded CNMI students who participated in the Annual Chamoru Language competition, saying that they are actively promoting the Chamoru language and "will help keep it alive for a new generation."

A total of 31 schools from Guam and the CNMI participated in the one-day event held at the UOG Fieldhouse, the Fine Arts Theater and the CLASS Lecture Hall in elementary, middle and high school divisions.

The theme of this year's competition was "I Fino Chamoru: Fuetsan i Hinanaota Ni Manaotao Marianas or The Chamoru Language: The Strength of the People in the Marianas."

The events included spelling bee, drawing, storytelling, children's choir, oratorical, poetry recitation, chant, choral reading, essay, proficiency, individual male and female singing, dramatic cultural interpretation and song with dance.

MCS and Whispering Palms recognized in junior mock trial tilt

18 other students hailed for their performances

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Mount Carmel School and Whispering Palms School got the approving nod of the sitting judge in this year's non-competitive junior mock trial, giving full recognition to all 12 members of both teams for their outstanding performances in Saturday's event.

Atty. Joseph Camacho was overwhelmed by the performance shown by Christian Miller, Jake Lee, Victoria Chetopa, Miguel Mandan, Gabrielle Race, and Daniel Author who represented Whispering Palms School in the event.

From Mount Carmel School, Camacho lauded the performances of Josie Santos, Ginny Yu, Ayahs Roberto, Andrea Manse, Victor Cabrera, and Chelsea Barolo.

Besides the two teams, 18 other students from various schools were also hailed for their presentation. They included Mona Mangling of Rota Junior High School, Hanukah Aquinas and Yuma Sao for Tinian Junior High School, Rhea Costales, Angelique Perez, and Marcel Atelic of Esculent San Francisco de Borax, Gabrielle Gaston, Cherish Llama, Bonniest Bacon, and Galingale Guiana of Grace Christian Academy in Rota, Karl Laconia, Rizzo Abutilon, Maria Dizon, and Hannah Alcordo of Hopwood Junior High School.

There were nine school teams that participated in the whole day event at U.S. District Court last Saturday.

Camacho was overwhelmed on the turnout of the noncompetitive event that saw the attendance of over 60 students from various middle schools on three islands.

This year marked the sixth year of the mock trial sponsored by the NMI Council for the Humanities.

"Every year this gets bigger and better…more schools are even entering both teams for the defense and prosecution. We're very happy to see the great interest among our students on this event," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune*.

While playing the roles of attorneys and witnesses, Camacho said students were provided the knowledge on how the court system works in the Commonwealth.

Because many of the participants were returning contestants, Camacho noted the significant improvements in their presentation.

Camacho described the event as "great experience" for the students and a good practice ground for the competitive senior high school mock trial competition which represents the island in the national event.

"Junior mock trial is part of the overall education of our students. Just like debates and forensic leagues, this also helps them to become a good citizen of the Commonwealth by understanding the role of the court," Camacho said.

NMI Council for the Humanities Executive Director Scott Russell, for his part, recognized the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for providing the financial support for the program.

"We thank Ed Arriola and the Foundation for their generous financial support," Russell said.

Compared to the high school division, the junior high level used a non-competitive format so there are no winners or losers. The judge gives general comments on both team's work and then recognizes a few students from each team.

From the seven schools and nine teams, *Saipan Tribune* learned that GCA and Hopwood both had prosecution and defense teams. To field five pairings, the Hopwood prosecution team completed twice. The competition started at 9am and wrapped up at about 5:30pm Saturday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mock trial judge Joseph N. Camacho poses with teams from Mt. Carmel School, left, and Hopwood Junior High School after the noncompetitive event last Saturday which saw the participation of nine teams from various public and middle schools in the CNMI.

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PAYLESS

From Page 1

tion in force, among other things.

Basa formally introduced his House Bill 17-45 during Friday's session, days after pre-filing it on March 16.

This is Basa's second attempt at cutting government spending as the Fitial administration revised its Fiscal Year 2010 projected revenue to $137 million and cut by 7.25 percent the budget authority remaining for the fiscal year.

House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) referred the bill to Basa's 12-member Ways and Means Committee.

The bill calls for a seven-hour work day or 70 hours per pay period instead of the regular 80 hours.

This means government offices will be closed from 7:30am to 8:30am, Monday to Friday.

At present, government hours are from 7:30am to 4:30pm on weekdays.

House Minority Leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) and other members maintain their opposition to the second austerity bill to be introduced by Basa, saying any reduction in government employees' salaries will worsen the government's financial problems.

They said there are other ways to cut the budget shortfall, including not funding non-essential government offices for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2010 and moving those funds to critical services like health, education and public safety. They also called for a budget summit to get input from public and private entities on how to solve the government's financial woes, and a desk audit to determine whether the government is indeed bloated as perceived.

Daniel Stafford, Commonwealth Supreme Court Clerk of Court and general counsel for the judiciary, expressed opposition to the austerity bill, and asked the House to provide flexibility to the judiciary.

Basa, in introducing his 11-page bill, said his cost-cutting measure will ensure that the cash-strapped government will continue to deliver basic services such as public health and safety, the implementation of a reduction-in-force, and projected payless paydays "as early as April 23, 2010."

"The longer we wait, the larger the imbalance," he told his colleagues.

The House is expected to take up the bill in its next session, which may be called as early as this week.

When parents and educators from Saipan, Rota, and Tinian trooped to the House to oppose Basa's original austerity bill, H.B. 17-22, House members filed the standing committee report recommending its passage. This effectively killed H.B. 17-22, which would have cut government work hours from 80 to 72 per pay period or a government shutdown of one day per pay period.

Basa's H.B. 17-45 would cut government work hours from 80 to 70, two hours longer than what's proposed in his first bill, but it would spread out the work hour reduction daily, instead of shutting government offices every other Friday.

The latest austerity bill affects both civil and excepted service government employees, as well as autonomous agency and federally funded workers, but they will continue to be paid during CNMI legal holidays.

The bill also encourages members of the Legislature, the governor, the lieutenant governor, justices, and judges to waive 12.5 percent of their salaries and donate them to the general fund. The 12.5 percent is equivalent to 10 hours of work per pay period.

JUDGE

From Page 2

an unresolved issue as to which statute should be applied in this case and whether the application of the CEA of 2007 rather than the NWA would make a difference in the Labor's obligations.

Secondly, Wiseman said, there is an issue as to whether or not Labor ever admitted to being responsible for enforcing labor bonds against surety companies based on Kaipat's conflicting reports.

Finally, the judge added, there are a number of material facts in dispute related to the workers' claims.

Wiseman set a status conference for April 1, 2010 at 1:30pm.

USCIS

From Page 1

most of the questions and concerns were about CNMI Department of Labor's revocation of some umbrella permits.

In his response to one of a few concerns on cases of umbrella permit revocation, Haith replied, "It's not yet 2011." His response drew laughter from the audience.

The federal government's position is that the CNMI Labor loses authority to revoke the umbrella permits after the federal law took effect on Nov. 28, 2009.

The CIS official suggested to workers and employers to see their office or Federal Ombudsman Pamela Brown if they have problems over umbrella permit issues.

Haith said employers should also consult their legal counsel if they have doubts.

With respect to the House and Senate passage of the Fitial administration-sponsored omnibus immigration bill that asserts CNMI control over nonresident workers, Haith said he has no comment as Gov. Benigno Fitial has not approved it yet.

Dean Tenorio of the U.S. Department of Labor was present to explain his office's functions and services.

Attorneys Joe Hill and Stephen Woodruff were also in the audience. After the forum, the workers lighted candles as a sign of enlightenment and peace.

UMW president Rabby Syed said they are very happy with the outcome of the forum because Haith answered many of their concerns.

OMNIBUS

From Page 1

Fitial is expected to immediately sign House Bill 17-25, HS1.

Introduced by Rep. Rafael S. Demapan (Cov-Saipan), the Fitial administration-sponsored omnibus immigration bill asserts CNMI control over nonresident workers, and converts the mandatory 20- to 30-percent local hiring preference into a floating benchmark.

The over 70-page bill seeks to conform the Commonwealth Code to the requirements of the federalization law, Title VII of U.S. Public Law 110-229, with respect to federal control of immigration and deportation.

Willens, in a memorandum for the governor dated March 18, said the Consolidated Natural Resources Act or the federalization law does not preempt the CNMI from administering and revoking the CNMI immigration status of aliens lawfully present on the islands on Nov. 28, 2009, during the CNRA's two-year transition period.

He agreed with Attorney General Edward T. Buckingham's legal opinion basically reaching this conclusion.

Deputy Labor Secretary Cinta M. Kaipat, in a three-page statement to the Legislature on Friday, said most of the provisions of the bill simply remove provisions with respect to immigration and deportation from various sections of the Commonwealth Code without changing the substance of the remaining provisions of those laws.

But during Friday's session, House Minority Leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) and other Republicans took turns questioning the legality and urgency of the bill, adding that the measure may only be advancing Fitial's agenda "that the federal government is wrong; that we control labor, not the federal government."

Buckingham and House legal counsel John Cool assured House members that the bill is legal and does not violate federal laws.

Willens, in his memo, also said that the preemption provision of the CNRA does not bar all legislation by the CNMI regarding its workforce either before or after the two-year transition period.

He said none of the provisions of the local omnibus immigration measure affects or unduly burdens the authority of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to implement its standard visa program, to issue regulations providing for a transitional worker program as directed by the CNRA, or to remove those aliens no longer authorized to remain in the CNMI.

"As amply documented in the Opinion of the Attorney General, the CNRA does not expressly or implicitly preempt local CNMI laws dealing with employment practices pursuant to the Commonwealth's authority over intrastate commerce and its police power. There is nothing in the language of the CNRA or its legislative history that suggest otherwise," Willens said.

'Premature, inaccurate'

Willens also described as "premature and inaccurate" the contention that enactment of the omnibus bill will violate other federal laws.

He said Federal Labor Ombudsman Pamela Brown, one of the opponents of the local bill, has suggested that its enactment will violate federal laws other than the CNRA.

Brown cited the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996, and the Immigration Reform Control Act of 1986.

"The first of these two laws appears entirely irrelevant to the issues now before the Legislature," Willens said.

The second law, he said, makes illegal the knowing hiring or recruiting of illegal immigrants who do not possess a lawful work authorization under the federal immigration laws.

He said some state laws have recently been challenged under this law requiring an interpretation of the preemption provision.

Kaipat, in her statement, said Brown's short legal opinion on the subject "is wrong."

"This is not an area of Ms. Brown's concern as federal ombudsman… So far as we know, no one at Homeland Security has asked her to take these confrontational actions in the Commonwealth," she added.

'Employers may be in violation of laws'

In his four-page memo to Fitial, Willens said in the first place, the CNMI Legislature clearly has the authority to update its laws in light of the preemption provision of the CNRA and to reaffirm the authority contained in that federal law to enforce the umbrella permits until Nov. 27, 2011.

"Employers who elect to hire employees who lack an umbrella permit may be at risk of violating both CNMI and federal laws during this transitional period until Nov. 27, 2011," Willens said in a footnote in his memo.

He said looking further ahead, the CNMI will be free to consider alternative means of regulating its workforce in light of all applicable laws.

"The clear direction of the CNRA is that United States citizens are to be favored for employment (and all foreign workers who cannot qualify under the federal system for a visa must be removed by the end of 2014)," Willens told Fitial.

He added that the provision regarding preferences for U.S. citizens in the legislation appears appropriate and lawful under both the CNRA and the 1986 Immigration and Control Act.

Kaipat, for her part, said the local measure is not limited to a two-year time horizon.

"The Commonwealth has the power, like any state, to legislate with respect to the terms and conditions of employment in the Commonwealth. This legislation will last for as long as there is employment in the Commonwealth or until the Legislature amends it," she said.

If enacted, the omnibus bill amends parts of Public Law 15-108, or the Commonwealth Employment Act of 2007. It will delete all regulations of the defunct CNMI Division of Immigration and "move any necessary language over to the labor regulations."

She added that another key provision of the bill is the reorganization of CNMI Labor, so that the department "can address more effectively the problems of promoting citizen employment."

MEDICAID

From Page 1

and 23 visit to Guam en route to Indonesia and Australia, and rescheduled it for June instead.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) said Medicaid funding will start increasing in 2011, from a total of $9 million that year to over $20 million by 2019.

"This is $100 million in new money on top of what the NMI already receives, or an estimated $158 million in all," he said in his latest newsletter.

Section 1204 of the bill, "Funding for the territories," increases federal funding in the Senate bill for Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the CNMI by $2 billion.

It also raises the caps on federal Medicaid funding for each of the territories, and allows each territory to elect to operate a Health Benefits Exchange.

The full text of H.R. 4872, the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act, is available at http://www.rules.house.gov/111_hr4872_secbysec.html.

Sablan said Republicans may still find a way to block this historic legislation but in his mind, he said "there is no question that we must improve health care and access to health care in the Northern Mariana Islands. H.R. 4872 will do that."

Sablan and 10 other members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus met with Obama earlier last week, and "the result is that Medicaid funding for the Northern Mariana Islands will nearly triple under terms of H.R. 4872."

He said just as in the health care bill the House passed in November, the CNMI governor will be able to create a health insurance exchange, where people can purchase insurance.

"Subsidies will be available to help those who are not eligible for Medicaid but who cannot afford to pay health insurance premiums. If the governor decides the insurance exchange is not the best option, he can put the money into Medicaid instead," the delegate said.

But he said health care reform still has hurdles to overcome in Congress.

"I am very pleased, however, that hard work and determination have kept the Northern Marianas and the other territories included. I look forward to supporting this bill as we continue to push for meaningful health care reform this weekend and beyond," Sablan said.

On Saturday on Capitol Hill, Obama made his final pitch for his prized piece of legislation—health care. He told Democrats on the eve of Sunday's historic House vote: "Let's get this done."

In February, CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho, Puerto Rico Gov. Luis Fortuño, and U.S Virgin Islands Gov. John P. deJongh Jr. sent a joint letter urging Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) to support quality healthcare for citizens in the U.S territories as Obama's proposal does not adequately provide equal healthcare opportunities for the territories.

The updated 153-page health care reform bill made a number of changes to the Senate bill.

The whole package will cost $940 billion over 10 years to provide expanded insurance coverage, according to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office.

But overall, the new plan could reduce the deficit by $143 billion over the first 10 years—$25 billion more than the Senate bill. This deficit-reduction number may change somewhat Sunday, depending on whether still more changes are made to the legislation.

Over the following decade, CBO projected, health reform could reduce the deficit by more than $1 trillion, although the agency stressed that such long-term projections are highly uncertain.

The estimated long-term deficit reduction comes mainly from more than $500 billion in savings from health programs like Medicare, and $438 billion in new tax revenue.

FEDERAL COURT UNSEALS IRS DOCUMENTS

Defunct UIC, Lin's office raided for alleged tax evasion, false tax

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation raided last year the now defunct United International Corp. and the office of its president and major owner, James Lin, for alleged tax evasion, willful failure to collect or pay over tax, and false tax return.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David A. Wiseman on Friday granted the U.S. government's motion to unseal the IRS' affidavit in support of an application to search and seize filed on Feb. 25, 2009.

Lin used to serve as chairman of the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association. In its heyday, UIC was one of the biggest garment factories in the CNMI.

Saipan Tribune contacted Lin and UIC for comments, but their telephone numbers as listed in the phone directory were already changed.

According to court documents, IRS agents conducted the search at UIC and Lin's office in San Antonio on Feb. 25, 2009. The search began at 9am and completed at 8:10pm.

It was not clear yet whether the U.S. government has filed criminal or civil case against Lin and UIC. The documents were contained in a miscellaneous case docket 09-00034 and not in a criminal case folder.

Under federal law, attempting to evade or defeat tax is a felony that carries a fine of not more than $100,000 ($500,000 in the case of a corporation), or imprisonment not more than five years, or both.

Willful failure to collect or pay over tax is a felony that carries a fine of not more than $10,000, or imprisonment not more than five years, or both.

False tax return, is also a felony that carries a fine of more than $100,000 ($500,000 in case of a corporation), or imprisonment not more than three years, or both.

IRS special agent Shaun Morita stated in his affidavit that probable cause exists to believe that Lin willfully subscribed to and filed with the IRS, Forms 941-SS for UIC, that where false or fraudulent as to a material matter such as gross wages paid.

Morita said probable cause exists to believe that Lin willfully devised a scheme to evade or defeat the assessment of Social Security and Medicare taxes by paying employees' wages in cash, not recording those wages on employees' Forms W-2, and not reporting those wages on the Forms 941-SS for UIC, resulting in additional tax due and owing.

In addition, the special agent said, probable cause exists to believe that Lin willfully failed to collect, truthfully account for and pay over, Social Security and Medicare taxes from employees' wages, as required by law.

Confiscated from Lin's office were a remittance requisition, seven CD's, and employee work records.

Also seized from some employees' desks, conference room, and storage rooms, employee background records, time cards, labor documents, tax returns, disbursement logs, miscellaneous pay stubs and payroll amounts to workers, payroll records, bank records, petty cash records, check stubs, invoices, employee list and time records, bookkeeping records, and other documents.

Morita said under the Internal Revenue Code, employers in the CNMI are required to withhold Social Security taxes and Medicare taxes from wages and salaries of their employees at the time of payment of those wages and salaries.

Morita said employers in the CNMI are also required to file quarterly tax returns with the IRS on Form 941-SS, Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return.

The returns, he said, reflect reporting to the IRS the total amount of wages and salary paid to their employees, and total amount of Social Security tax and Medicare tax which the employer has withheld from each employee, as well as the amount of Social Security and Medicare taxes it has paid as the employer's share of those taxes.

Morita disclosed that he conducted interviews on former UIC employee, Yuehan Liu, thrice in October 2008, once in December 2008, and once in January 2009.

Saipan Tribune printed on Oct. 28, 2008 the story regarding Liu's appeal to the CNMI Department of Labor Secretary to look into his complaint against the defunct UIC.

Through an interpreter, Liu in the story stated, among other things, that he filed a complaint against UIC for serious violation of both federal and local labor, immigration, and tax laws, but a Labor investigator ignored his allegations.

Morita stated that Liu admitted he worked at UIC from December 1997 until it ceased operation on Sept. 21, 2008.

Morita said Liu had an employment contract with UIC, which Liu stated he did not sign and that his signature on his contract was forged.

The job title listed on his employment contract was "pattern grader cutter," however, he did not perform such duties.

Liu said he did not receive compensation during the first three months at UIC so he asked why he had not received any pay.

Liu said Lin told him he needed to first speak with his boss, referring to his (Lin's) father-in-law, William Huang.

Lin later told Liu to pick up his pay from the accounting department. Liu said he received $3,000 cash from the accountant and subsequently got $1,500 in cash on the last day of each month.

The final payment was on Sept. 20, 2008. UIC also paid for his personal living expenses, rent, cable bills, telephone bills, utilities, gas and provided a company vehicle.

In his work at UIC every day, Liu did not punch a time card, nor did he keep track of the hours he worked. The accountant instructed him not to punch a timecard.

Liu stated that if factory workers worked more than 120 hours in a two-week pay period, as they routinely did, they did not log the additional hours on their timecard.

Instead, someone kept track of the additional hours and paid the workers cash for those hours.

Liu stated that the payroll department distributed the cash to factory workers who worked more than 120 hours in a pay period. The workers signed a form when they received the cash.

During his remaining years at UIC, Liu claimed he never saw or signed his tax refund checks.

Morita said a computer-generated report of Liu's 2007 pay stubs reluctantly provided him (Liu) by the accountant, showed his purported earning, deductions and net pay.

Morita said the wage amount listed was at $3.05 per hour. "Net pay listed on this report is less than the amount that Liu actually received during that time period," Morita said.

Morita said he interviewed Lorraine D. Pangelinan on Jan. 22, 2009 who stated she was hired by Lin as secretary in 1990.

Pangelinan's last day at UIC was Dec. 31, 2008. She was asked to continue working after UIC ceased operation in September 2008.

Pangelinan said she was then promoted as office manager. She was not required to punch a time card. She said she received $250 cash from the accountant as Lin's "incentive pay."

When she asked what's "incentive pay" the accountant said it was "money on the side" and that it was her raise.

Five years ago, Pangelinan was given another raise and she began getting $500 cash from the accountant every two weeks, in addition to her regular pay.

Pangelinan thought the "incentive pay" was to help pay for personal living expenses, since UIC provided some employees with housing and other benefits that she did not receive.

Pangelinan said taxes were not withheld from the "incentive pay" she received, nor was such pay included on her W-2's.

The manager said other employees also received "incentive pay."

Pangelinan said Lin would also give cash as bonuses to most or all of the office workers a few days before Christmas.

Pangelinan said the bonus that she received was never included in the wages reported on her W-2.

Pangelinan stated that UIC hired workers from Thailand, China, the Philippines, and locally from Saipan. Most of the employees were sewing machine operators.

Morita said according to Pangelinan, sometimes the workers' job titles as listed on their employment contracts did not match their actual job duties.

Morita said Pangelinan stated that the job titles listed on the contracts of many of the managers, supervisors, and office workers, instead described lesser positions than those actually held.

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TO SWAY TRUSTEES TO JOIN CASE VS MERRILL LYNCH

Lawyers court Fitial administration's help

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lawyers for the plaintiffs in the case against Merrill Lynch are seeking the administration's help in securing a meeting with the NMI Fund Board of Trustees and eventually persuade them to join in the case not as respondents but third party complainants.

This was disclosed by Atty. Michael W. Dotts, of O'Connor Berman Dotts & Banes law firm; and Gerald S. Clay, of the Clay Chapman Iwamura & Pulice Nervell law firm based in Hawaii, last Friday citing the effort is the right direction to demonstrate the trustees' serious care to the pensioners than the investment consultant that they hired for many years.

Clay was on a special trip last week to the island to push the effort for CNMI retirees.

In a letter to Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos, Dotts asked the official's help to facilitate a meeting between the parties, but which has yet to happen to date.

"It's not going to cost the trustees any money…." said Clay, if the Fund he said is worried of any monetary cost that may be incurred in the effort.

It was last year when retirees Mariano Taitano, Roman Tudela, and Patricia Guerrero filed a suit against Merrill Lynch in an effort to recover millions of dollars in the retirees' pension fund. They alleged that the firm provided bad investment advises to the trustees that led to millions of losses.

Clay and Dotts explained that though the plaintiffs included the trustees as respondents in the case, it is because of the legalities of the issue.

They believe that a stronger case will stand in court against Merrill Lynch if trustees will become a third party complainant because the contract was inked between them.

"What we're trying to do now is get the trustees and tell them that we have to name them [respondent] because of legal reasons. We have to sue the trustees so that they would then allow us to get to Merrill Lynch," Clay said, adding that he's wondering on the reasons why the trustees are hesitant to join the lawsuit as plaintiffs.

"I am not sure of the reasons other than the fact that the trustees are afraid of also being sued and afraid of losing their own property. But that's a wrong conclusion…" he said.

Clay disclosed that the lawyers representing the plaintiffs will only get paid if the case wins.

"So there's no risk at all to the trustees…because we're not here trying to get their money but go after the investment consultant and recover the millions of dollars for retirees' pension," he said.

Clay and Dotts believe that they have a "good case" against the company, who they said has been found by U.S. Securities Exchange Commission collecting excessive fees and hidden costs through "soft dollar" accounts from other public pension programs.

They claimed that the retirees' case is the 24th filed against the investment consultant.

Besides the service fee which is valued at $150,000 annually, the lawyers claimed that Merrill Lynch is also charging "hidden fees" from the trustees.

They also questioned the 20-year relationship built by the trustees with the investment consultant despite its "unsatisfactory" performance.

They claimed that from $840 million investment fund in 1998, the amount slipped down to $450 million until it dropped to $335 million to date.

This, they said, is in conflict with the claims of "good earnings" presented by Merrill Lynch during the recent three-day money managers' meeting.

They claimed that the consultant provided aggressive recommendations for stocks than bonds, which they considered negligence on their part.

The plaintiffs estimated recovery of over $100 million if it wins the case against the investment consultant.

When asked for comment, Press Secretary Angel Demapan said the administration refuses to give a position citing that the issue is under litigation.

"The administration respects the autonomy of the NMIRF. Moreover, since the case is already being litigated, the administration respects the justice system and believes that it should be allowed to take its course," Demapan said.

Five named overall champions in CNMI-wide science fair

PSS eyes overall winners competing in national contest next school year

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Five entries bested over a hundred projects to emerge champions in this year's Commonwealth-wide Science Technology Electronics and Mathematics Competition held last Saturday and Sunday at Marianas High School gymnasium.

The overall winners in their respective grade clusters will represent the CNMI in the science fair contest in Guam slated in May.

Yesterday, judges gave their unanimous approval to Raven Andevor's project that demonstrates how to make saltwater into freshwater. The student from Koblerville Elementary School was hailed the top winner in the kindergarten to first grade division for his entry in the earth and space category.

"My Tomato Plants" of San Antonio Elementary School student Denise Alisson Bicera also emerged overall best entry in the second to third grade division and will demonstrate the same project in the Guam competition.

Bicera's project falls under the category of life science.

In the fourth to fifth grade division, Sinapalo Elementary School got the overall title for the project "Solar Oven" entered by Jane Mendiola. Her entry falls under the physical science category.

San Vicente Elementary School, meantime, ruled the sixth to eight division when its student Ilyssa Geronimo's project emerged best in the technology category. The student successfully demonstrated how hydroponics works in her project.

In the high school division, Marianas High School student Vicky Kim's "Neck and Waist" project under the mathematics category got the highest rating from judges.

According to Rizalina Purugganan, Koblerville Elementary School principal and chairperson of the STEM Fair, there were over a hundred projects entered in this year's contest. Besides public schools, Mount Carmel School and Marianas Baptist Academy also joined the competition.

The over 100 projects were the Top 5 winners in the school-wide science fair in the three islands.

Purugganan described this year's event as successful, noting the participation of all 20 public schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

This year marked the third year of the competition initiated by the Public School System, which entries got overwhelming results in the Guam competition in the last two years.

Purugganan said the CNMI will send next school year the five overall champion projects to compete in the Intel National Science Fair in the States.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS' participation in last year's contest in Guam gained positive feedback on the students' entries. There were 18 projects that competed last year in the said event.

Instead of the Guam competition, PSS plans to send delegates straight to the national event beginning next school year.

Purugganan said planning and preparations are being initiated this year, including the membership requirements to the Intel National Science Fair.

Asked if PSS' young scientists are ready for the national contest, Purugganan is convinced of the good chances that await the local students. Like other academic school competitions, funding will be sourced from the federal monies intended for the purpose.

There are seven contest categories in Saturday's competition—life science, earth and space science, physical science, health/nutrition/medical science, technology and electronics, and mathematics.

Besides the awarding of trophies to the five overall winners, the committee also awarded medals and ribbons to the top three winners in each category per grade level.

Purugganan emphasized that the fair aims to help students become problem-solvers, effective communicators, and gain high order thinking skills.

The chairperson recognized the valuable help extended by the committee members who comprised of representatives from various schools and the judges who allotted time for the competition.

She lauded the assistance and support of Jessica Barcinas Taylor who is the career technology and math program coordinator.

Prior to the public viewing of the science projects, judging was conducted Saturday at the gymnasium. Winners were named yesterday in a ceremony.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-DOC-072

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 23, 2010 TIME: 10:00 A.M.
OPENING DATE: APRIL 23, 2010 TIME: 1:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF FOUR LUBE OIL SEPARATORS FOR POWER PLANT 1, SAIPAN, CNMI"

COPIES OF THE ITB PACKAGE MAY BE PICKED –UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ONLY ONE WALKTHROUGH WILL BE CONDUCTED AT THE POWR PLANT, LOWER BASE, SAIPAN, CNMI ON **APRIL 9, 2010 STARTING AT 10:30 A.M.**

THIS IS AN AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 PROJECT AND AS SUCH, ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED MUST BE MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/S/ MICHAEL ADA
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

/S/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
ACTING SECRETARY OF DPW

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-DOC-073

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 23,2010 TIME: 10:00 A.M.
OPENING DATE: APRIL 23, 2010 TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF NEW TURBOCHARGES AS RETROFIT UNITS FOR ENGINES #5-8 POWER PLANT 1, SAIPAN, CNMI"

COPIES OF THE ITB PACKAGE MAY BE PICKED –UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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/S/ MICHAEL ADA
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

/S/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
ACTING SECRETARY OF DPW

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-CHC-077

SUBMISSION: APRIL 09, 2010 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"RADIOLOGICAL SERVICES AND TENANCY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTH CENTER"

COPIES OF THE RFP PACKAGE MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON **MARCH 26, 2010 AT 10:00 A.M.** AT THE SECRETARY'S OFFICE, LOCATED AT THE DR. JOST T. VILLAGOMEZ BUILDING, LOWER NAVY HILL. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO **MR. PETE T. UNTALAN, MHA ACTING DEPTY SECRETARY FOR HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION** BY FAX TO: (670) 234-8930 OR E-MAILED TO health1@pticom.com NO LATER THAN **MARCH 30, 2010 CLOSE OF BUSINESS.**

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **JOSEPH K.P. VILLAGOMEZ**
SECRETARY OF HEALTH

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-DEQ-080

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: APRIL 1, 2010 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY SYSTEM (UPS) AND TWO (2) TRIPP LITE 6-OUTLET LINE CONDITIONERS FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THIS IS A FEDERALY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, ***LOCAL PREFRENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE***, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/s/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
DIRECTOR OF DEQ

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

OES kindergarten registration to start April 5

Kindergarten registration at Oleai Elementary School for school year 2010-2011 will begin on April 5, 2010 and ends on April 30, 2010 from 9am to 4pm daily.

Kindergarten students must be born between Sept. 1, 2004 to Aug. 30, 2005. Birth certificate, school entrance health certificate (updated), current school accident/ health insurance/Medicaid (updated), map of residence, and legal adoption/guardianship documents (court issued) are required for enrollment.

The OES zone covers the areas bounded by south of Naked Fish on Beach Road, Gualo Rai, Chalan Laulau, Chalan Kiya (golf course), bottom of As Terlaje Hill, north of Island Market (Calvo's) to Falughula and San Jose (Oleai). ***(PR)***

13 gold medalists in regional NFL named

NMI team to advance to national tilt in Missouri

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Thirteen students will represent the CNMI in the U.S.-wide National Forensic League competition after bagging the gold medal awards in the regional contest held last Saturday at Marianas High School.

The regional winners will vie for the national titles against students from the 53 other U.S. states and territories in the national competition to be held in Kansas City, Missouri this coming June.

Every year, the CNMI sends delegates to various NFL events and has been consistent in getting good results after returning with numerous awards and recognitions.

Of the 13 students, emerging as the biggest winner during Saturday's competition was Mount Carmel School senior student Ryan Ortizo who bagged all gold medal awards in four categories—dramatic interpretation, poetry, impromptu speaking, and duo interpretation.

He was recognized as the first CNMI competitor to qualify in the national NFL events for four years in a row.

MONETH G. DEPOSA

The 13 members of this year's CNMI Team to the national NFL event in June pose after the awards ceremony Saturday night at Marianas High School.

As a contest rule, Ortizo has to choose only one category for the national event and silver medalists in the other categories will represent the team.

NFL board chairman in the CNMI Harold Easton lauded the achievements of Ortizo, whom he described as the symbol of what the competition wants to accomplish every year.

It was disclosed that for over 10 years of competing in the national NFL, CNMI students ranked in the nation's Top 100 and even the Top 10 which is an amazing testament to the success of the program in the Commonwealth.

Ortizo thanked the program for providing him the opportunities and experiences that he would cherish forever.

"I feel very honored and blessed to be part of this competition. This is my fourth year in the national team and I am very proud!" he told *Saipan Tribune*, describing this year's events as the toughest he experienced in four years.

"The competition this year is the toughest I've ever experienced but I enjoyed it. Everyone did their best and I can say that all our hard work finally paid off," he said, adding that preparing for four contest events was truly "challenging and tiring."

"But I can tell you that it's all worth it!" he said.

Ortizo revealed his secret in his constant winning of gold medal awards in four years: "Always try your best, never give up and no matter the outcome will be, enjoy the experience!"

With Ortizo in the national team was his partner in the duo interpretation, junior MCS student John Edward Elenzano who will compete in the national for the third time this year.

"I am really happy that it turned out this way! Everyone was really going at it," he said. Elenzano was also the gold medalist in the storytelling category which will be represented by the silver medalist in the national event.

Elenzano and Ortizo chose to represent the team in the duo interpretation.

Meantime, Grace Christian Academy freshman student Angela Faith Mamaril said she is excited to be part of the national team.

Mamaril won a gold medal in the extemporaneous commentary last Saturday.

"This is my first time in the NFL regional and it's very overwhelming….I am excited for the national competition," she said, adding that she will do her best for the team.

Other gold medal winners and official members of the team included MCS' Anastasia Schweiger for humorous interpretation; GCA's Bianca Blanco for dramatic interpretation; Marianas Baptist Academy's Eunice Park for extemporaneous; MBA's Jessica Lee for foreign extemporaneous; MCS' Hazel Doctor for Oratorical; GCA's Oilang Maui for prose; MHS' Chantee Rossette for poetry; MBA's Michael Sheun for expository; GCA's Jenica Smithee for story telling; and Chon Woo Lee for impromptu.

There are 13 categories in the NFL of which Lincoln Douglas debate has yet to happen. Winner in the category will join the group to complete the slate for the national team.

'7 schools, about 80 competitors'

According to Andrew Golden, tab-room coordinator for NFL, this year's regional events saw the participation of seven school teams and about 80 high school students.

These included Calvary Christian Academy, Kagman High School, Saipan Southern High, Marianas Baptist Academy, Grace Christian Academy, Mount Carmel School, and Saipan International School.

Golden described this year's events as "very difficulty" based on the scores of competitors.

"It's a very difficulty competition this year…we have very strong competitors based on the results. They all did a wonderful job today," he said.

Both Easton and Golden lauded the volunteer work extended by judges, teachers, and coaches to make the regional events a success last Saturday.

They pin high hopes to this year's CNMI Team.

"We're hoping our kids will get some breaks again in the events and possibly some breaks in our qualifiers," Golden said.

The competition, Golden said, helps students build logical arguments and become effective communicators, which is among the PSS benchmarks and standards.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

RFP-10-014

REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING 8-INCH PETROLEUM PIPELINE FOR CUC POWER PLANT NOS.: 1 & 2

The Office of the Executive Director. Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting proposals to completely design and conduct engineering (phase 1) and replace (phase 2) the existing CUC fuel transfer pipeline to the power plant 1 & 2 at Lower Base, Saipan. The options required are (a) to have an extension to the port for direct tanker transfer and (b) to have the complete pipeline installation, underground.

The Scope of Work and Solicitation Package will be emailed upon request, by CUC Procurement & Supply Office, during working hours (7:30a.m. to 4:00p.m.), Monday thru Friday, except government observed holidays, **until April 12, 2010.**

One (1) original and five (5) copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format, must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-10-014, Replacement of Existing 8-inch Petroleum Pipeline for CUC power Plant Nos. 1& 2"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office. 3" Floor, Room No.4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 9695O, no later than **April 20, 2010** at 10:00 AM, local time. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. CUC reserves the right to reject any proposal received after that time, Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations, § 50-50-225 (Competitive Sealed Proposals).

A **mandatory** Pre-proposal conference followed by a Site Visit will be arranged for this project on **March 30, 2010 at 10:30 a.m. local time** at the Saipan Lower Base CUC Power Plant I Administration Bldg. The prospective proposers are required to familiarize themselves with the site conditions.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United Stales Secretary of Treasury or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A performance and payment bond of hundred (100%) percent each of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety companies must hold a certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety of proposal security or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. No advance payment will be authorized on the project or an Irrevocable Letter of Credit (100% aggregate contract cost/CUC Beneficiary) or a payment bond. All insurers questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). A Clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

The bidder is required to submit a Copy of his CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wages, prevailing through the period of contract as indicated in the web page http:/www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/cnmi/cnmi.htm. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

CUC is seeking proposers who have qualifications and experience in installing petroleum pipelines in accordance with 49 CFR regulations other relevant standards including the American Petroleum Institute (API). Contractors are advised that proposals with any conditions or exceptions to the terms of this Request for Proposal (RFP) and failure to supply or respond to any clarification of proposal upon request in a timely manner shall be cause to reject their proposal. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. Contractors are advised that the work will be carried out as a part of CUC response actions under the consent decree noted as Stipulated Order No.2 (SO 2).

Contract will be awarded to the party submitting the most responsive proposal, and who is determined by CUC to be best qualified to perform the Contract satisfactorily, and to meet all other requirements thereof. CUC reserves the rights, nevertheless, to accept a proposal other than the lowest, if it determines that CUC's interest will be best served by doing so, or to reject any and all proposals or parts of proposals received.

All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. local time on **April 14,2010** to Mr. Manuel B. Sablan, procurement and Supply Manager. CUC P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950 via email - **msablan@cucgov.net**, Procurement Assistant Ms. Beck Grimes - **beckyg@cucgov.net** and Mr. Venu Prabrahaka, Power Generation Engineering Manager - **venu@cucgov.net**. CUC will respond to any questions and clarification only to prospective proposers who have registered to the solicitation.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Assistant Executive Director for Operation

/s/ ANTONIO S. MUNA
Executive Director

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
322-6537/8 (Voice) 322-6449 (TTY) 322-6536 Fax
PO Box 501521 Saipan, MP 96950 website: www.ovrgov.net

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), will be conducting statewide public forums for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services and State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). You must come!

ROTA
March 23, 2010
Bay View Hotel - Lanai
5:30-7:30pm

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: If you require reasonable accommodation (e.g., large print, sign language interpreter) to participate in the public forums, please contact the OVR Council Liaison Magin Iginoef at least 2 days before the scheduled forums. Copies of the plans can be obtained and accessed at www.ovrgov.net and at Navy Hill Bldg N2.

Publication of this notice is paid for with federal funds made possible by RSA Grant #H126A050078 of the United States Department of Education. (OSERS)

Kick Butts Day set for Wednesday

Kick Butts Day is back, and it's bigger and better than ever.

This Wednesday, March 24, young people throughout the CNMI, in every state of the nation, and around the world will organize and take action to fight youth tobacco use as part of the National Kick Butts Day Initiative. More than 2,000 events are expected to take place on this celebrated day of youth activism, including a full slate of activities here on Saipan.

Here, hundreds of young advocates, their families, and supporters will march in a parade that begins at 2pm from the San Antonio basketball court to Hopwood Junior High School. Public and private schools have been invited to participate, and to bring banners to show their spirit and solidarity. The program at Hopwood will include live entertainment, interactive exhibits, and great giveaways, culminating in a rousing dance-off, and wrapping up at 6pm.

This year marks the 15th Annual Kick Butts Day for the nation, and the 5th Annual Kick Butts Day for the CNMI.

"Kick Butts Day is a national day that empowers our CNMI youth to take a stand against the harmful and addictive effects of tobacco use, and embrace a healthy, tobacco-free life," said 2010 CNMI Kick Butts Day Chair Ricky Itibus. Itibus is a program officer at the Community Guidance Center, which offers substance abuse prevention and counseling services, including a tobacco cessation program.

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing more than 400,000 people every year. In the CNMI, cancer is the second-leading cause of death after heart disease, and tobacco use is a known factor in many of the cancers reported. According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, which organizes the National Kick Butts Day Initiative, almost 90 percent of adults who have been regular smokers began smoking by the time they were 18. Every day, more than 4,000 youngsters try their first cigarettes. Another 1,000 become addicted smokers, one-third of whom will die prematurely as a result.

In the CNMI, youth smoking rates are staggering—among the highest in the world. In 2000, a Youth Tobacco Survey found that nearly 55 percent of middle school and 85 percent of high school students in the CNMI reported smoking in the last 30 days. "Protecting our young people from tobacco addiction and exposure to secondhand smoke should be one of our highest priorities as a community. Prevention saves lives," said Dr. Jack Hardy, senior advisor for the Commonwealth Cancer Association, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to cancer awareness, prevention, and support services in the CNMI.

In addition to Saipan youth, their friends, and families, CNMI Kick Butts Day supporters include the Department of Public Health, the Community Guidance Center, the Comprehensive Cancer Control Program, Ayuda Network, the Department of Public Safety, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program, the Northern Marianas College, CREES Program, the Pacific Wellness Center, Marianas Health Services, the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, and the Commonwealth Cancer Association.

For more information about 2010 CNMI Kick Butts Day events, contact Ricky Itibus at 323-6595 or 323-7848, or email ritibus@cgcspn.net . For more information about the National Kick Butts Day Initiative, visit www.kickbuttsday.org . For more information about the benefits of quitting smoking and successful strategies for doing so, call the Community Guidance Center's Quitline at 323-QUIT. For more information about cancer support services and other programs of the Commonwealth Cancer Association, visit www.ccamarianas.org, email cca@ccamarianas.org , or call 682-0050. ***(PR)***

House honors 50th anniversary of Mariana Trench dive

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. House of Representatives has passed a resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the descent of the submersible *Trieste* into the Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench. H.R. 1027, authored by Congressman Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, passed the House on a vote of 398-2 last week.

Sablan

"I am very grateful to Science and Technology Committee Chairman Bart Gordon for bringing my resolution to the floor for approval," said Sablan.

"The timing is perfect. Because in a few weeks we will be honoring Captain Don Walsh, the surviving member of the *Trieste* crew, with a National Geographic Society dinner, a reception at the Smithsonian Institution, and a day of press events focusing on the remarkable dive 50 years ago. This is also a wonderful opportunity to draw attention to the state of the oceans and ocean exploration today and to the newly created Mariana Trench Marine National Monument.

"I will be very happy to present this resolution to Captain Walsh and to the children of Jacques Piccard, the other *Trieste* hero, during those events."

The *Trieste* made its historic—and never again repeated—dive into the 36,000-foot deep Mariana Trench on Jan. 23, 1960. Sablan introduced his resolution in January to coincide with the actual anniversary.

Sablan spoke on the floor during the debate on his resolution, calling attention to the contrast between the resources given to outer space exploration in the last 50 years, while so little is known of Earth's oceans, our inner space.

"Throughout this period of outer space exploration, the 80 percent of our work covered by the oceans—our inner space—remains virtually unknown and unseen by human beings.

"Our Nation has stopped in its track to witness the brave exploits of its outer space explorers and lauded them as heroes. Yet Captain Don Walsh and Jacques Piccard and the team of U.S. Naval personnel who made the dive possible are virtually forgotten.

"H.R. 1027 aims to correct that. This resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the *Trieste* dive is meant to shine a light on what these brave men and their support team accomplished. This resolution is meant to inspire us with the example of Don Walsh and Jacques Piccard and reinvigorate the commitment of our Nation and this Congress to unlocking the secrets of the oceans of this Earth, of which we know so little."

Sablan also used the occasion to draw attention to the newly created Mariana Trench Marine National Monument with surrounds parts of the Commonwealth.

"This monument not only contains the Mariana Trench where the *Trieste* descended, but also three islands of my district—Uracas, Asuncion, and Farallon de Pajaros—as well as a multitude of undersea volcanoes, upwellings of liquid carbon dioxide, and other features believed unique in all the world.

"The people of the Northern Mariana Islands are proud of this environmental treasure and are committed to its protection so that it may be a source of wonder to those who visit and of knowledge to those who come there to explore and discover as Don Walsh and Jacques Piccard did 50 years ago."

During his remarks Sablan recognized the co-sponsors of his resolution, Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU) and Sam Farr (D-CA) for their support and continued leadership in oceans policy. ***(PR)***

TALENTED TEACHER

Tinian Elementary School special education coordinator Patrick Pressley recently gave an impromptu concert to a small group of fifth grade students.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Taking time out from his busy schedule, TES special education coordinator Patrick Pressley answered questions regarding his violin and demonstrated the relationship between the strings and the pitch. Pressley ended with a gig called, "Poke That Pig's Foot in the Fire," which had students clapping.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 22, 1999

Water project sidetracked by financial woes

A proposed water desalination plant for central Saipan is off again, bogged down by high costs and little support from residents and government officials worried over the economic crisis besetting the island. The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation on Friday scrapped its plan to contract another company to produce potable water from the sea in a highly effective, but costly process viewed as last hope by Saipan residents perennially hit by empty faucets. A task force created by the government-utility firm called for the cancellation in view of failure to source funding for the project that has been in the planning board for the last four years. CUC board director Benjamin A. Sablan, who heads the task force, said the decision followed increasing efforts to seek others ways to improve the water system on the island.

Fishing body urged to rethink decision

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council has rebuked the National Marine Fisheries Service for its disapproval of the implementation of closed areas around the American Samoa islands to exclude large domestic fishing vessels. In a strongly-worded resolution passed last week, the 12-member Council branded as capricious and arbitrary the NMFS decision which was meant to protect the US purse seine interests at the expense of the American Samoa longline fishery. The Western Pacific Council is the policy-making body for fisheries in the Western Pacific Region, including American Samoa, Hawaii, the Northern Mariana Islands and other US islands in the Pacific.

March 22, 2000

New FTZ bill version gets House nod

The House of Representatives salvaged the administration's plan establishing free trade zones in the CNMI when it passed yesterday a measure exactly similar to the initial proposal drawn up by a government task force. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio earlier had rejected the legislators' proposal after several changes were made on the plan, including use of public funds on Tinian and Rota for the proposed free trade zones, in fear they would violate constitutional provisions. Under House Bill 12-11, amendment approved by the 11th Legislature were struck out to retain the administrative authority for those lots to the Division of Public Lands, instead of granting powers to the mayors of the two island municipalities.

Full tax rebate on land compensation OK'd

A measure passed by the House of Representative yesterday will seek a 100 percent rebate on taxes paid on cash compensation involving land transaction between the government and private landowners. Offered by Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider, House Bill 12-131 will compliment two existing laws that set the mechanism for land exchange and compensation by the government for private properties. But landowners agreeing to buy out of their lots instead of land exchange are required to pay taxes to the CNMI, thereby getting an unfair deal compared with those who want to be compensated with another property.

March 22, 2001

Increased police visibility in Garapan suggested

Measures to fortify safety enforcement at Saipan's tourist zone are alive with proposals to allocate fresh funds from poker licensing fees for the construction of a temporary koban at the Garapan district. Rep. Heinz Hofschneider proposed that the Legislature appropriate a sum of $35,000 collected from the annual local license fee for poker machines under Saipan Local Law 11-2 for the said project. The legislation offers the use of the poker machine collection fees without fiscal year limitation. The Secretary of Public Works has been eyed to act as the expenditure authority for the funds appropriated under the proposed measure.

Mandarin Air may drop nonstop Saipan flights

The Northern Marianas tourism industry is facing yet another blow. Mandarin Airlines is eyeing the possibility of entering into a charter agreement with travel agents in Taiwan and close down Saipan station for good to diffuse airline operational costs. Saipan Station Manager Charlie Ling, in an interview yesterday, disclosed top executives of the company are now discussing on the future of Mandarin Air's regular Saipan-Taipei flights. Once the Federal Aviation Administration maintenance programs of the three 737-800 aircraft are completed in May, Mandarin Air is scheduled to resume its regular flights to Saipan.

Adopt-A-Bin project launched to minimize marine debris

The Mariana Islands Nature Alliance will be removing both real and perceived barriers to proper waste disposal at seven popular public sites this month by installing mixed waste and recycling bins at Garapan Fishing Basin, 13 Fisherman Monument, Kilili Park, Sugar Dock, and Wing, Laolao, and Obyan beaches.

The Adopt-A-Bin Recycling Project, funded by NOAA's Marine Debris Prevention Program, aims to diminish the amount of litter left on the shore that eventually washes into theocean to become a floating "soup" of garbage.

Last year's Coastal Clean up Day confirmed what had already been observed; by installing and paying for weekly trash hauling services three years running, MINA virtually ended the litter problem once miring the beauty of Wing Beach.

"The next step is to see if we can also get people at the beach to separate plastic, glass and metal from their garbage before throwing it in a bin. Recycling is the key to lengthening the life of our landfill. The more we separate, the less we have to bury," said Castro "and what better way to establish recycling than by placing bins in public places," said MINA chairperson Fran Castro.

Ericco Enterprises was contracted by MINA to build the recycling and mixed waste bins scheduled for installation this Saturday, March 27, at Obyan Beach. Regular trash hauling services will begin immediately.

MINA has secured funding to pay for the first few months of service for the seven sites, but is asking interested individuals, families, and businesses to be part of the solution to the pollution problem by contacting MINA to "Adopt-A-Bin" and pay for one year of trash hauling services. In return, Adopters will have their name or logo placed on their bin and be internationally recognized as one of Saipan's eco-friendly and community-oriented businesses in a documentary that will be shown at the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force meeting next year in Washington, D.C. Adoption fees are 100 percent tax deductible.

Already four bins have been adopted by MINA, Brabu Pharmacy and Wellness Center, Ericco Enterprises, and Saipan Rotary Club. Several other organizations have also expressed interest in the program.

If you would like to adopt a bin or would like more information please contact MINA's project manager at kathy@minapacific.org or visit the MINA website at www.minapacific.org to learn more from their goals and projects page about how you can prevent marine debris. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Ericco Enterprises was contracted by MINA to build the recycling and mixed waste bins.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
MINA's Adopt-A-Bin Recycling Project aims to diminish the amount of litter left on the shore.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Happy birthday to Victoria Bellas. We love and miss you so very much. Enjoy your birthday. Love from the Kilili family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Happy 15th birthday to Janece Mae C. Salas. Greetings from your Arizona and Saipan family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Happy birthday to Chris Sablan. Hope you have a great day. Greetings from Honey, Liyah, Nasia, Jun Jun, and your family. We love you!

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS ZONING BOARD TO HOST VILLAGE MEETINGS

The Zoning Board and Office will hold a round of village meetings to seek comments about how the current zoning law is working, and will update and revise the current zoning law with the goal of addressing the issues and concerns expressed by the community, private sector and the legislature. The public consultation and information campaign over the next two months will continue in order to obtain feedback required to update the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law. Meeting dates and locations which have been confirmed are:

Tuesday, March 23, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Garapan & Gualo Rai Villages @ Garapan Elementary School Cafeteria**
Thursday, March 25, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**San Jose Village @ Oleai Elementary School Cafeteria**
Tuesday, March 30, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Tanapag Village @ Tanapag Elementary School Cafeteria**
Tuesday, April 6, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Kagman and Capitol Hill Villages @ Kagman Community Center**
Thursday, April 8, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**San Vicente Village @ San Vicente Elementary School Cafeteria**
Thursday, April 15, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Dandan Village @ Dandan Elementary School Cafeteria**
Tuesday, April 20, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**San Roque Village @ GTC Elementary School Cafeteria**

The Board encourages anyone with suggestions that might improve the language of the law, or changes to the zone boundaries to attend. Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the meeting. Written suggestions may also be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30 pm, April 30, 2010 or they may be submitted via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

Anyone with questions about the meetings may contact the Zoning Office by phone at 234-9661 or by e-mail at staff @zoning.gov.mp.

/s/ Herminia M. Fusco, Chairperson

ZONING OFFICE TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

The Zoning Office will be holding workshops to promote educational awareness of the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law, as well as to seek comments on how the law is working. These workshops are in line with the Zoning Board's goal of addressing the issues and concerns expressed by the community, private sector and the legislature as it prepares for the law's review and update. The public consultation and information campaign will continue over the next month in order to obtain feedback required to update the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law. Please note the following changes made to the dates, times, and target group for the coming days:

Wednesday, March 31, 2010	**9:00 to 10:00am New Business Developers**
Wednesday, March 31, 2010	**2:00 to 3:00pm Surveyors**
Wednesday, April 7, 2010	**9:00 to 10:00am Engineers/ Architects**
Wednesday, April 7, 2010	**2:00 to 3:00pm Adult Businesses**
Wednesday, April 14, 2010	**2:00 to 3:00pm Government Agencies**

All workshops will be held at the Zoning Office conference room, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan. Anyone with questions about the meetings may contact the Zoning Office by phone at 234-9661 or by e-mail at staff @zoning.gov.mp.

/s/ Herminia M. Fusco, Chairperson

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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MEMBER
The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Countering the cartels

The decomposing bodies of a U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agent and his pilot are discovered wrapped in plastic bags at a ranch about 60 miles from the Guadalajara streets where they were kidnapped by the cartel controlling drug trafficking in central Mexico. The agent's corpse bears traces of the drugs a doctor administered to keep him alive during 30 hours of interrogation, as his torturers crushed his jaw, ribs and windpipe, and drilled a hole into his skull.

"We are in a war and cannot accept that Enrique Camarena died in vain," the U.S. ambassador says.

That was 25 years ago. Last weekend, a U.S. consular official, her husband and the husband of another consulate employee were fatally shot after attending a children's birthday party in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano called the killings "brutal, unconscionable and unforgivable." This was another crime in a different city controlled by a different cartel. But it is all part of the same war of attrition that has been under way for more than a quarter of a century. What progress do the United States and Mexico have to show for it? Drug consumption in the U.S. has continued unabated, and the violence has only increased.

In the first 2 { months of this year, nearly 500 people have been killed in Ciudad Juarez's drug violence, many of them bystanders to the battles among competing drug gangs and between cartels and government troops. That's in addition to the more than 2,600 killings there last year _ not across the globe in Baghdad or Kabul, but in a city on our border. The violence has driven out a quarter of Juarez's residents in the last two years.

We don't yet know whether consulate official Lesley Enriquez or her companions were personally targeted or if perhaps traffickers wanted to send a generic message to U.S. and Mexican officials. The Aztecs gang, lowly foot soldiers for the Juarez cartel, is suspected in the slayings.

President Felipe Calderon has deployed thousands of troops to Juarez in recent years, but since the killing of 15 youths at a teenager's birthday party in January set off a wave of protests by parents, he has visited the city three times and promised an infusion of money for social programs _ a kind of counterinsurgency program designed to draw unemployed toughs and gunmen away from the cartels. We hope this broader approach will have more success. The U.S. government must continue to work with Calderon not only to fight the traffickers, but to create jobs, strengthen government institutions and professionalize a legal system sadly overburdened by the need to bring the killers of Enriquez and so many others to justice.

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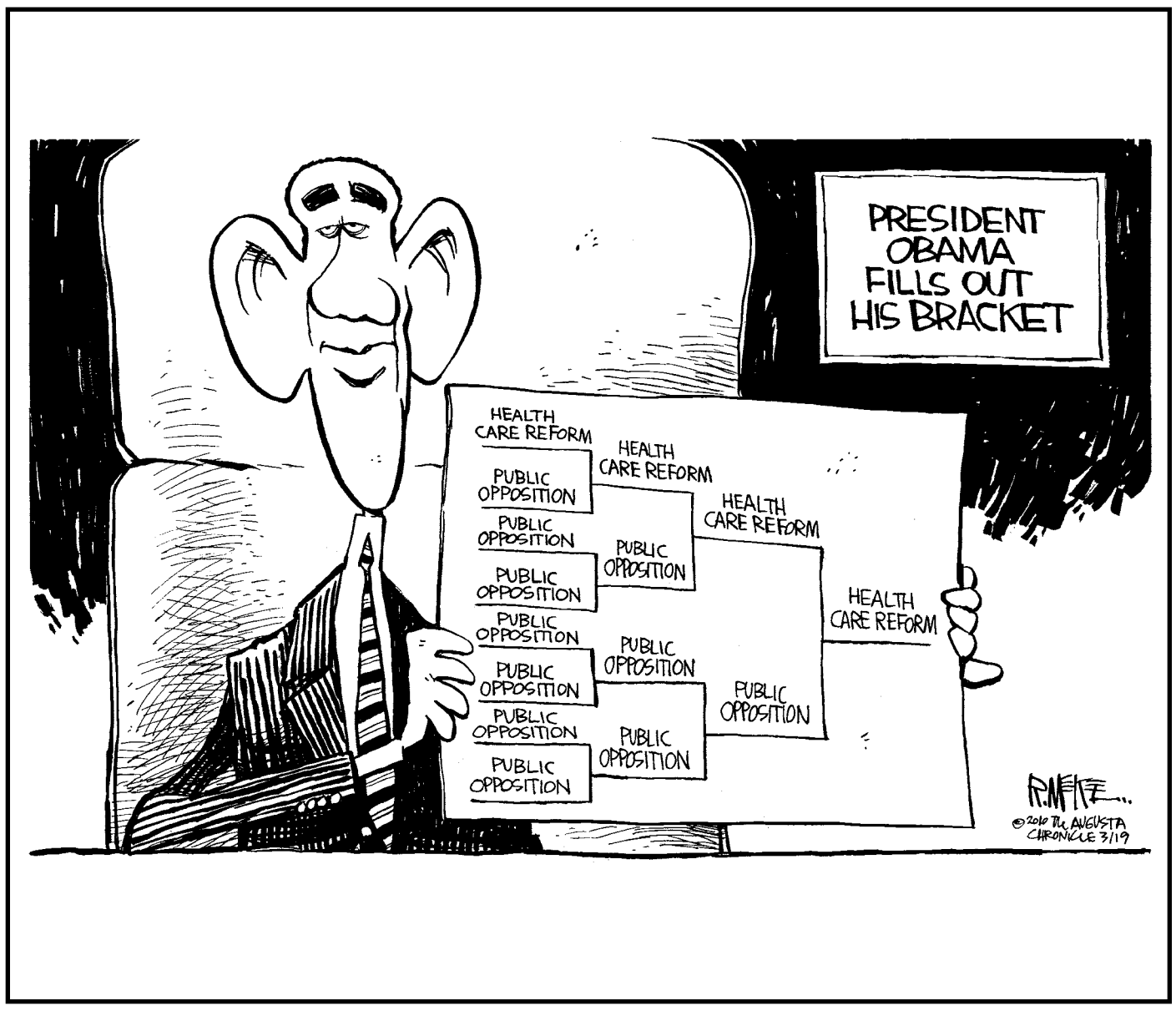


The government and businomics

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

Daily our government makes decisions that affect our lives and pocketbooks. Some of the decisions are good, but many are bad ones. Our economy is in a depression and is spinning its wheels trying to find some foothold. I feel that one of the major causes is the lack of comprehension by many of our political leaders about our national and local economy and its true state. Sad to say many leaders lack a basic understanding of business management and economics. As a result they cannot do long range planning or forecasting.

To help explain my point I have borrowed the word "businomics" from Dr. William B. Conerly's book called *Businomics* in which he proves that there is a connection between business and economics. All decision makers must understand the correlation between the two.

Passing laws without understanding their effects on the economy is sheer folly. We are so concerned with proper wording in a bill so we hire bundles of lawyers. But how many times do we understand the economic effect that bill will have if passed into law especially if it has to do with revenue generating? We can see this in the current debate on the budget. Where are the economists whose analysis could help us understand where we are and want to go?

My experience of over 46 years as a businessman has taught me that I must understand not only my business but the various laws of economics in which I am engaged. I have also learned that when a business or government goes sour, 95 percent is due to mismanagement or incompetence! It has been proven that unless our government leaders understand the basics of business and economics, there will be no solutions to our problems. With the study of economics, government leaders will learn how to make more meaningful decisions.

Let's define "economics" as the social science that studies the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. It is concerned with description and analysis of those goods and services. The economist also studies how much money people are spending, how they are spending it, and their attitudes towards future spending. Then based on his study of these past actions, he tries to forecast the future by offering estimates which help leaders to make decisions. In this manner a business or government can take a calculated risk on the next decision. All decisions are risks but "calculated risks" are based on a sum of facts which can minimize errors.

"Business" refers to any gainful economic activity or, more narrowly, to organizations that produce and distribute commodities or services. Businesses also produce jobs which create a flow of money in our community. The health of the business community affects the health of the government. Both overlap. One depends on the other for growth and order.

The successful businessman has learned his economics and his business acumen. As a result his business grows. A successful government also understands the activities of business, the flow of money, jobs, growth and services needed and how to provide them.

It is imperative that our lawmakers realize that governing a country is more than churning out bills and shaking hands to make us feel good. Each one must master the basics of business and economics. Each one of them before introducing a bill or voting on a bill must understand its ramifications. This involves research and time. Too often laws are passed which are rescinded several months later because they were found to be defective. Where was the research and thought behind them?

All our decision makers, including agency heads, should be mandated to attend periodic workshops to study how business and economics affect our society. Lawyers, doctors, CPA's all go back to school to learn new ideas and to refresh their training. Why aren't Legislators required to do the same? They must understand our society and how it fits into the larger picture.

How many of them or us understand some of the following? For example, do we know what the CNMI GDP(Gross Domestic Product) was for 2009 or its estimate for 2010? Do we know what is the average earning and spending ability of our people? Do we know how much money we export through purchases of items? Do we understand and know that by using foreign labor, we are exporting scarce dollars which run into over $100 million per year? Do we understand the power of inflation? Do we understand the cost of borrowed money? Do we understand the complexity of our society with its mixed races? Do we understand the impact all this mixture has on our economy?

As we wrestle with our annual budget, do we fully understand where the money will be coming from and how it will be generated? Do we understand the impact of housing construction and other construction on our economy? Has anyone made a study of

See GOVERNMENT on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Commonwealth Covenant Day

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

This week ushers us to the first of the four annual "C" holidays in the CNMI with the focus on the Covenant on March 24, the Culture on Oct. 11, Citizenship on Nov. 4, and the Constitution on Dec. 8. Waning interest in the content of these holidays prompted Ruth L. Tighe's mind to suggest combining the four. We might then liven up the celebration into Commonwealth proportions from its meaning of "commonweal" and intentionally ground it *cum* BBQ on a covenant of other Cs: consensus, collaboration, cooperation, and compassion.

This evening, the Humanities Council-sponsored Covenant Debate is showcased at the Guma Hustisia. With the format of a Town Meeting where a moderator asks questions of 'debaters,' we suggest that the use of 'debate' is archaic, given our understanding of the valid varying perspectives, that paradoxes are viable, and the presentation of the same need not be done in an atmosphere of confrontation and disagreeable disagreements.

Given a competitive edge, the debate deteriorates in one-up-wo/manship rather than as an attempt to clarity and comprehend. One need only watch the proceedings of the British Parliament, or the current debate in the U.S. Congress on Obama HealthCare (need we mention closer home to Taiwan, Korea, Philippines, and Capital Hill?) to understand that "dividing the house" is no longer a productive format for reaching a consensus. Beneath all is the acceptance of presumed vested class interests, the royals versus the commoners to the Brits, and the patricians versus the citizenry in American legislatures, acting as invisible thesis-antithesis poles to produce a synthesis when facilitated in a civil clash. The clash is no longer civil, nor the clash itself necessary.

Moderator Pat Coleman might lead debaters who are won't to say, "I do not agree," with, "tell us how you see it differently." The French *vive le différence* might be a more useful context than the Hegelian penchant for dialectics, or the Marxist view of contradictions. At the level of understanding, effective pedagogy informs us that clarity and persuasion lead to consensus more than the "my way or the highway" choice. In another time, we shall consider the difference between consensus and compromise, but for now, in a culture of onionskins, the consequences to the process of debate is counterproductive!

The practice of restrictions is at the heart of tonight's discourse, focusing on the current interpretation that only qualified voters of NMI descent will be allowed to vote on the future application of Article XII of the Commonwealth Constitution. The Article restricts land ownership to persons of Northern Marianas Descent, defined as 25 five percent of recognizable bloodline. In a 2011 referendum, Commonwealth voters will be asked to consider retaining, amending or abolishing Article XII.

Don A. Farrell might consider updating his scholarly tomé on the *History of the Northern Marianas Islands,* 1991, or issue Volume II, to elaborate more on the creation of the Covenant and the Constitution and its import and impact on the Commonwealth post-garment industry's mercenary flashpoint in the local economy, and the labor/immigration effect on the fledging visitors' industry. The latter phrase, stated as such, is value-laden as well, but we might be 'forgiven' our perspective, given that the Willens and Siemer engaging account in *An Honorable Accord* plays on the local preoccupation with "respect" and its tradition of surface 'integrity' and its Asian counterpart of facile "face."

Farrell mentions in passing that Franklin Haydn Williams, U.S. representative to the round of talks, coined the term "covenant" at the conclusion of the fifth round. The Compact of Free Association of the Cook Island-New Zealand axis, was the prevailing social contract model familiar to members of the U.N. Trust Territory Council at the time.

The term used by biblical writers in the Judeo-Christian tradition is itself amorphous, more a leap of faith than anything else, until used by Scottish Presbyterians in the 1600s in declaring its cause vis-à-vis their southern sovereign lords. Williams' use of the word in 1974 precedes the popularizing of the term by James Michener in his novel on South Africa in 1980, so what the term meant to the negotiating team is anyone's guess. Williams' contextual reference to Woodrow Wilson's "open covenant, openly arrived at" in the President's 14-points towards peace post-WWI is instructive.

Indeed, the aspect of "denial" guided the perspectives across the negotiating table. From the U.S. was the denial of military strategic use of Micronesia after the experience with Imperial Japan's South Sea Mandate from the League of Nations (understood as "south" of Japan, not south of the equator, though I needle my neighbor Walt for continuing to use the geographical reference). Hardly was there any defined military policy and strategy, though the power plays were clear especially with the adversarial alpha-male-good-shepherd rhetoric of the army-navy military-industrial complex. (Not unlike the not so entertaining current *Browne-Bucking Ham* off Broadway show going into the summer!)

From the Marianas side, it was a justifiable denial of being lumped together with other political units in Micronesia, opting to recover its own unique cultural practices and identity, separate from the artificial clumping it had experienced through centuries of foreign rule. But as all convenient denials show, it is easy to state what one thing is not; it is harder to define what it is! Denials come easy; affirmations take longer to formulate!

The old French word *covenant* means "agreement," from *covenir,* "agree, meet," derived from the Latin *convenire* "come together" that gave us the word "convene." The older Jewish term of *b'rith* between YHWH and the Chosen people, translated as "covenant" proposes a meaning more organic and way beyond just calcified legal social contract.

We face a more complex global situation now and the catastrophe we have created for humanity's survival and the planet's sustainability is more daunting than projected by our leaders in media sound bites. Would that our debaters tonight focus more on what the covenant means to us now, rather than just falling over each other to second-guess what the framers meant back then. Tonight's topic points to that direction: what 2011 holds more than what 1976 intended. After all, we might not be able to prepare a future for our children, but surely, we can prepare our children for the future of our choosing.

Asuntun Attikulu Dose

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

DelRosario is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

Sige mona i diniskuten Attikulu Dose, espesiatmente probision siha ni dumisplanta tautauta. Debi u guaha antau na inatuñgu hafa gaige gi halom este na attikuu. I sigiente sinidahu siha ya hu presesenta kumu materiat para mas sanu yan antau na inatuñgu gi halom tautauta.

Tres patte ti debi de umasotta gi kaprichoña sa sumen na chatsaga para I mismu tautau tanu:

1. I man-dinisplanta pot manaigue guine gi 1950 siha na sakan lau tautau este orihinat. Man-hanau guine pot appottunidat gi otru lugat siha deste Guam esta Amerika yan otru tanu.

2. I debi un` gai haga` 25 pot sientu entre Chamorro `sino Karolinas para un` kualifikau gumai tanu guine lau tautauta ha` talu man-inaminasa.

3. Dueñon propiadat 'nai i dueño ti dueño gi tanoña mismu.

I kutturan tano'ta sumen antau na areglu guaha 'nai todu tautauta ta akude piot gi oran chinatsaga siha. Taigue este na sensian kutturan tanu gi man-mapega na tres asuntu gi papa Attikulu Dose. Propiu na ta bisita este na asuntu siha para ta korihe i man-dinisplanta ginen riku na kutturan niha mismu. Yangin tai haga i prohimu lau ginen este mañainaña, debi ta kubre sa' tautauta mismu. Ti isauña na mafnas prefektu haga natibu ginen guiya lau enfin ginen este haleña.

Klaru lokue na maseha manu gi tanu 'nai mangaige, i tautau islas man-dadaña pot mediu parehu hale' niha sa` man-ginen tanu islas siha giya Pasifiku. Guaha nu este siha na dinaña giya Texas, California, Washington yan Oregon. Mas ke benti mit na tautau islas mangaige guine na inetnon siha kada sakan. I pininiten tano`ta metgut gi halom korason tautau islas siha.

Debi ta tanae nu i direchon niha i primet grupu kontodu i segundu na tropa pot parehu man-ginen este siha na islas. Mauleg lokue ta komprende na megai meskla gi bandan kasamientu pagu na tiempu. Dispues, i mafotman pisun familia ma-establese ginen inaguaiya, ahe ti ginen teug na haga Chamorro 'sino Karolinas.

I otru asuntu tineteka dueñon tanu 'nai malimitte i dueño dumispone tanoña. I sentru na asuntu gaige na uma-atotpe direchon i dueño gi disposision propiadatña yan Attikulu Dose. Kau dinanche i para u guaha otru dueño gi tanomu? Kau propiu na otru para u entalu gi disposision tanomu? Kau para un` sedi este na probision konstitusion petmanente gi disposision tanomu 'sino propiadatmu?

Antes 'nai megaiña gi tautauta man-guagualu, buente propiu este na probision 'nai fitme usun pisun tanu diariu gi probision mantension familia. Lau matulaika este na modun linala guine sa' esta memegaiña man-machochochu entalu gobietnu yan bandan bisnis. Yahu petsonatmente lumie' intaktu sumaga este na mandatu kontra i mangai tanu. Lau esta lokue man-toa i tautauta ya seguruyu na este na direcho siha solu siña dumiside sin u fan ma-entalue' ni propiadat niha.

Ni unu gi entre hita siña sumañgan kabales hafa gaige gi tatten pettan gimahu solu guahu solamente. Pot este na rason na debi i direchon dueñon tanu de ta onra sin ditension. Guiya lamon i dueño kau para una ma-atkilu tanoña pat u bende pot nesessidat familia. Este na direcho debi tanae` I dichu dueñon tanu. Yangin ti man-listu hit umonra este na direchu, pues mauleg ta amut todu i tautau ni propiadat niha ya hita ta dispone.

GOVERNMENT

From Page 10

the impact that the military buildup in Guam will make or are we just wishfully thinking that it will be huge? These are only a few of the questions that must be answered before we pass laws about revenue-generating or any law. The list goes on and on. And as a result of the lack of data, we get muddled decisions.

We have many lawyers working for the administration and the Legislature. But do we have any economists? Who in our government has majored in economics or even taken courses in economics? I feel that should we hire several economists, our future would look better. I am not saying that economists have all the answers, but their research will make us think deeper before we rush to pass law affecting the economy.

In Wednesday's newspaper I read that Pohnpei (FSM) has just hired an economist. Guam has several as well as Hawaii. In fact Guam's economist is telling the government and the people that the benefits of their military buildup are vastly over-inflated. I wonder what these states know that we don't? Every government that I read about uses economists to help pilot their community. All major businesses do. Why not us?

An economist can analysis the spending and investment of our money. He will also use past production records, sales records, savings habits and past spending habits to chart our growth and direction. An economist can also guide our various government agencies with their budget spending.

When we are entrusted with millions of dollars, we need help on how to best utilize it. We need to see results. Someone once told me: A wise man knows when he doesn't know something, so he finds someone who knows what he doesn't know to help him.

We are concerned with our tourist industry going down. Have we done a deep analysis of our markets to study tourist attitudes and fears? Have we studied that particular country's economic problems? Are we studying tourist spending in the CNMI to see what this year will be like? Or are we just whining that our tourist market is down without doing any real in--depth research?

When an investor wishes to come here what studies do we do before we give away big tax breaks? Do we have any idea of the cost of imports? How much money would we save if we produced more of our necessities here? How many skilled labors and in what category of work do we need after the non-resident workers leave? Who knows all this? Yet we pass laws with little knowledge on what we are passing and its effect. Then we wonder why things don't get better.

We need to understand "businomics" to run our government more effectively. Without a full understanding of business and economics, we stand little chance of improvement. And the debt gets bigger and bigger.

I repeat: the more precise information we have the better and less risky our decisions will be. Let's hire some economists and see whether or not we will be able to make better decisions. They are like doctors telling us what the diagnosis is. FSM has an economist! Guam has economists! Other governments have economists! Let's get smart too and hire some economists and get our economy in order! Have a great day!

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼75
Palau	Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼77
Pohnpei	Rain	▲85	▼78
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲89	▼78
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼77

Around The Globe

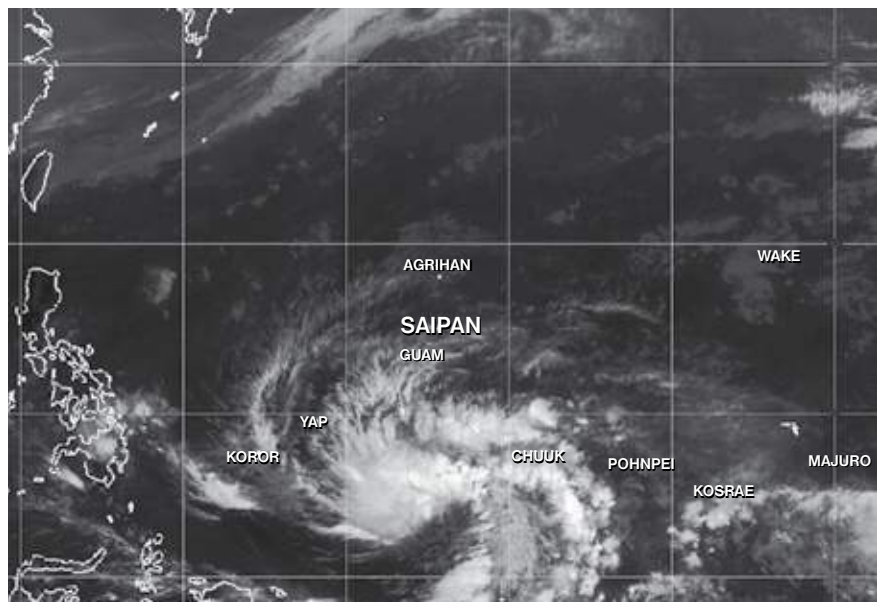
Auckland	Showers	▲71	▼63
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲52	▼28
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲79	▼68
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲79	▼70
London	Rain	▲53	▼49
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲74	▼52
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲92	▼75
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲73	▼54
Miami	Cloudy	▲77	▼59
New York	Rain	▲54	▼40
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲54	▼46
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲58	▼46
Pusan	Rain	▲55	▼35
Rome	Showers	▲64	▼50
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲52	▼37
San Francisco	Sunny	▲62	▼47
Seoul	Rain	▲41	▼34
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲57	▼48
Washington, DC	Rain	▲64	▼42

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:31 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
5:323 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
10:46 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
6:29 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough extends northeastward from south of the Philippines to 4N130E then turns eastward to a tropical disturbance centered southwest of Chuuk near 4N148E and continues southeastward to end at EQ154E. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are found near the disturbance south of Guam and just southwest of Chuuk within 275 miles of a line from 9N146E to EQ151E. Trade winds converging toward the southeastern end of the trough are producing scattered showers southwest of Pohnpei between the equator and 6N from 155E to 159E. Trade-wind convergence is coupling with upper-level divergence to generate scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over tarawa and Butaritari atolls but just south of Majuro between the equator and 6N from 165E to 180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:20 AM	6:28 PM
Tuesday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM
Wednesday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:18 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:17 AM	6:29 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:36 AM	
Tuesday	11:35 AM	12:06 AM
Wednesday	12:36 PM	1:03 AM
Thursday	1:38 PM	1:58 AM
Friday	2:40 PM	2:49 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 16, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

DL638	8:00am	10:55am	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	5:50am	8:40am	Daily
DL638/288	8:00am	1:40pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL297	4:35pm	7:30pm	Daily
DL289	4:50pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

0Z608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

0Z604	2:10am	6:00am	1
0Z604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
0Z119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
0Z606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

0Z604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
0Z604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
0Z608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/933	3:15pm	8:40pm	Daily via GUM
0Z606/703	3:20pm	10:55pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

0Z604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
0Z604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
0Z606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

DL641	9:05pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL290	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
DL298	10:15am	2:45pm	Daily
DL287/641	5:50pm	1:35am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL288	9:00pm	1:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

0Z607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

0Z605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
0Z120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
0Z603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
0Z603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

0Z706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
0Z702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
0Z702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	10:55pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
0Z704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

0Z724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
0Z750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
0Z722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
0Z722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
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  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
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Letters to the Editor

Open letter to Malou Berueco

Dear Ms. Berueco,

This is in response to your letter to the editor posing several questions wrapped in your opinions about the Commonwealth.

Your question: Why did the Department of Labor issue the umbrella permits before Nov. 28, 2009?

Answer: PL 110-229 specifically required the federal government to respect any permit issued by the Commonwealth government prior to the transition date so long as that permit remained valid and was not revoked. The Commonwealth government acted to provide stability in the workforce so that foreign workers would not quickly fall into illegal status. As you know, the initial regulations issued by the Department of Homeland Security (which were struck down by the federal judge) provided only 10 days for workers to find new jobs if they were terminated by their employers or not renewed. Ten days is a very short time for someone to find a new job. We thought that it would be better to allow more time. Under the federal system, employers can employ a worker without a contract, terminate a worker for any reason at any time, and provide no guarantee whatsoever that the worker will actually be paid. Workers in that kind of unstable situation, that has caused many, many problems in the mainland U.S., would not be very productive for the Commonwealth's economy. The Department of Labor's system provides stability.

Your question: Why is it that the foreign national identification card does not contain an issuance date, unlike previous permits the Department of Labor issued?

Answer: The budget of the Department of Labor has been cut very substantially. As a result, we have cut costs wherever we can, even in relatively small ways. The cost to print identification cards has been reduced by cutting the amount of ink we use and changing the card stock.

Your question: Why not issue those unclaimed umbrella permits?

Answer: The department issued very clear widely publicized guidance in October 2009 that anyone who did not sign the contractual agreement included in the umbrella permit and take personal possession of the permit prior to Nov. 28, 2009 would not thereafter be issued a permit. Unfortunately, some commentators in the Commonwealth and elsewhere advised that the umbrella permit was not necessary. I recall that you issued public statements questioning the umbrella permits. Foreign workers who followed the advice that umbrella permits were questionable or unnecessary are now facing the very real possibility that they will fall into illegal status very soon. If they had followed the department's guidance and picked up their permits, they would not have this problem.

Your question: Why not work with other government agencies to find ways and funds on how to train your citizens to be workers?

Answer: We intend to replace foreign workers systematically until every citizen has a job. That is one of my priorities. The recent disparagement of Department of Labor programs has made the Commonwealth's citizens very determined in this regard, and we will move aggressively on this front. In many cases, our citizens do not need training. They are very able employees. They need help in overcoming illegal sponsorships that keep foreign workers in jobs for which they are not paid or kickback situations in which foreign workers are paid less than the minimum wage. They need help in dealing with the hostile workplace environment when foreign workers try to squeeze them out of their jobs. And they need help in requiring a few foreign owners of businesses to obey Commonwealth laws. Do not underestimate our citizens' capability to replace foreign workers, and our efforts to help them to do so.

Your question: Does the CNMI really need to import lagoniza, tocino, et al.?

Answer: The CNMI's economy is not a "managed" marketplace where the government dictates who should import what—as is the case in some foreign countries. Private enterprise imports what sells.

I have these additional comments on the opinions you offered.

The intention of the Department in issuing umbrella permits was to stabilize the workforce. There is no basis whatsoever for your statement that this was really "to make it appear…that the CNMI government was concerned about the economy." Every Commonwealth Administration has been vitally concerned with the economy. You came to the Commonwealth for the economic opportunity that it offered to you personally. Many aliens came to the Commonwealth because they wanted to get into the U.S., but the U.S. system (now extended to the Commonwealth) would not accept them. And the Commonwealth has been very good to you. You have had an opportunity here to use your skills and to advance based on merit. You have a good job; you married a U.S. citizen and have better status by reason of that; and the only labor complaint you've had since I have been at the Labor Department was that your U.S. citizen son had difficulty in his place of employment due to a work environment that did not favor U.S. citizens. Similarly, the Commonwealth's guest worker system has been very good to most foreign workers who have had economic opportunities that never would have been available to them in their home countries.

There was no surprise whatsoever that the federal government accepted the umbrella permits. We discussed the umbrella permits with Department of Homeland Security officials in Washington as we developed the program. We knew they would be accepted when issued.

Thank you for recognizing that the department expended considerable energy and intelligence, plus very scarce funding, in providing the umbrella permits that are so helpful to the majority of foreign workers. Having stabilized the workforce and protected our economy to the extent we can, we are now turning our primary attention to ensuring that U.S. citizens fill jobs held by foreign workers until every citizen holds a good job.

Cinta M. Kaipat
Deputy Secretary of Labor

Utilize 'Saipan Zoning Law of 2008'

Dear Acting Administrator Ogumoro,

It would appear to be a "miracle" to say that your position in this matter was of complete incense, and Pastor Kalei of the New Beginning Ministries has lied in all of her accusations against your office. If there was no adverse action taken against her, wouldn't she have received her business permit without unnecessary and adverse delays (actions), which in turn forced her to sacrifice her monetary investments, lose her $100,000 building deposit, and sell her belongings to afford to leave the island for Guam.

You ask me to face you directly, but I find it unnecessary if you would directly face your own "Saipan Zoning Law of 2008" manual, and read it thoroughly if you haven't already. If you had done your due diligence as Acting Administrator, you would have read on page 24 (section 309 zoning board), part (e) (5), the board shall have the power to approve, deny, or approve with conditions, applications for permits and other approvals provided in this law. Furthermore, on page 30 (section 404 allowable uses in zoning district: Table 1. Table of permitted, conditional and temporary uses), you can easily in under uses: Church or place of worship, that it can be used under conditional uses in the village residential designation.

Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that the aforementioned church was in the process of occupying the top floor of an existing two-story commercial enterprise in operation since 1992—which due to a blatant oversight is marked as village residential instead of village commercial as is the nearby Happy Market—your office has been given the legislative leeway to use your common sense and issue conditional permits without delay when it is permitted by your own "Saipan Zoning Law of 2008" manual. The true harm is not committed by me when I voice my concern about the arrogant and anti-business actions permitted by your office, when the intent of the zoning law is to assist business and help the Commonwealth survive in these very turbulent economic times. The waste of taxpayer's money will result from your unjustifiable decisions that adversely affect the potential Commonwealth business investors who leave in disgust or eventually will sue zoning's poor judgment calls.

I again ask you to exercise common sense and utilize the "Saipan Zoning Law of 2008" manual, for the benefit of business, not the detriment of business. Don't you realize that local businesses drive the economic health of our community and provide taxes that pay for our government services and the salaries of government officials who are suppose to act as "civil servants," not "civil masters." Again based upon the numerous complaints and adverse actions created by your office, warrants to have the Zoning Act of 2008 suspended, and support the need to modify and revise the manual. I frankly don't think your office is approaching the concerns and problems of you clients in a positive way of finding viable solutions, which sometimes takes extra time. It is so easy to just say no and eliminate extra work. My real concern is that you please encourage your office to take the extra time to assist and support people, in order to easily open their businesses within framework of expeditious and reasonable solutions. Furthermore, encourage the Zoning Board to allow conditional permits to all businesses to operate while win-win solutions are created.

Rep. Stanley T. McGinnis Torres
CNMI House of Representatives

The longest dream I encountered in my lifetime

With all due respect to my brothers and sisters of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and other countries, I have a dream that I want to share with you all. I am not criticizing or trying to intimidate anyone, especially our lawmakers.

I dreamt that I was a congressman. I will refer to myself as congressman John Doe. We were in the House Chamber for a session and 27 members were present, including the Speaker of the House. The Speaker opened the floor for discussion. At first, we discussed old business, and then we moved on to the next item on the agenda called the "new business." The speaker asked if anyone would like to bring up any "new business." Congressman Ed Moe rose up his hand and said, "Me, Mr. Speaker." Congressman Moe expressed his desire to amend his House Bill-14-65 and introduce a new bill, HR-14-69. The speaker said, "Let's hear your HR-14-65 motion to amend. "Congressman Moe said, "Mr. Speaker, today, in order to obtain a death and birth certificate, it costs $50. I want to amend this fee to $100." The Speaker asked Congressman Moe if he could give a good reason why he should amend HR-14-65. Congressman Moe replied that the government would have more revenue. The Speaker asked the members of the session if anyone has any concerns or opinions regarding the motion to amend the bill. Congressman John Doe replied. He said, "Mr. Speaker, these death and birth certificates are only pieces of paper that are copied from their original versions with stamps or a seal. The cost is too much, people of the Commonwealth would complain and say this is a highway robbery. "After hearing this comment, the Speaker asks if there are any more comments on this amendment, if not, they would move to a vote. The Speaker then asks, "Those in favor of the HR-14-65 amendment to raise the Birth and Death certificate fee from $50 to $100 say "Ay," and those who oppose this amendment say "no." The vote turned out to 17 members saying "Ay" and 10 members responding with a "no." The Speaker then said, "This HR-14-65 amendment has passed and will now move on to the senate."

"Now, Congressman Moe, let's hear your new HB proposal," the Speaker states. Congressman Moe says, "Mr. Speaker, House Bill14-69 proposes to have all properties in the CNMI taxed, except Managaha Island and government properties. Residential, business, hotels, golf resorts, and other remaining properties should all be taxed with differing amounts." The Speaker then says, "Give me a good reason why we should pass you HB proposal." Congressman Moe explains, "The government would benefit from the increase in revenues. Our government is now broke. We have accrued so many deficits from our mistakes. With the new revenue, we can pay our debts to the retirement fund. We can now travel and see the world." The speaker then asks if there are any concerns or opinions from the other members. Congressman A claims that we are already implementing the reduction of work hours and unpaid holidays. Congressman B states that the people of the CNMI will become angry. Congressman C says the people will surfer. Congressman D states people voted us into these offices because we promised them better times. Congressman E claims that some of us will lose our candidacy in the next election. Congressman F states that the people would ask us what happened to the campaign promises. Congressman G says that people would criticize us and say we are only good at introducing House bills. Congressman John Doe then rose up to say, "Mr. Speaker, have we forgotten the speech of President Abraham Lincoln given at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on Nov. 19, 1863?" The Speaker asked, "What did he say?" Congressman John Doe states, "On the last paragraph of his speech he states, 'and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the Earth—'".

Suddenly, I felt someone shaking me. I opened my eyes to see that my wife was trying to wake me up. I asked her why she was waking me up. She said I was hitting her with my left arm. I told her that I was sorry, and that I was dreaming. I got up, lighted a candle in front of my saint and prayed. After praying I went to the kitchen, drank a glass of water, and returned to my room. My wife asked me what I was dreaming about. I told her that I was dreaming I was an instructor conducting a less to about 100 students about leadership, on topics of how to be a good leader principles from "How to Win Friends and Influence People," and principles from "How to Stop Worrying and Start Living." My wife asked why I was shouting and hitting her with my left arm. I told her that one of my students was trying to take my Gordon book and that we were fighting.

My brothers and sisters, that is the longest dream I ever encountered in my life. Again, it is not a criticism or an intimidation, but only a dream.

Ray R. Agulto Jr.
Kanat Tabla

Business

Bernanke: Keep Fed as watchdog of small US banks

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke made a fresh pitch Saturday to retain oversight of small banks, contending that what the Fed learns from that role helps it assess the overall health of the entire U.S. financial system.

Bernanke, in a speech to the Independent Community Bankers of America's meeting in Orlando, Fla., argued against a Senate proposal that would scale back the Fed's banking duties.

Close connections with community banks give the Fed a better understanding of the nation's financial risks, including problems in commercial real-estate and small-business lending, according to Bernanke's prepared remarks.

A Senate bill to overhaul financial regulation would strip the Fed of its power to supervise state-chartered banks and bank holding companies with assets of less than $50 billion. That would leave the Fed overseeing only 35 big bank holding companies. The legislation, written by Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., is set to be debated on Monday by the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, which he leads.

Critics have blamed lax regulation at the Fed and at other agencies for contributing to the financial crisis.

Financial instability can undermine small banks, not just big ones, Bernanke said. Small banks contributed to the problems of the Great Depression, he noted.

Small banks have expressed support for continued regulation by the Fed and have made arguments similar to Bernanke's.

Dodd's proposal would mean major changes to Fed's system of 12 regional banks. For example, Fed banks in Kansas City, Mo., and St. Louis no longer would have any banks under their supervision.

AP

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, March 17, 2010, before the House Financial Services Committee.

Bernanke defended the Fed's structure of regional banks and a board based in Washington. He said it has provided policymakers "with a way to keep in close touch with the continent-spanning, highly varied economy of the United States."

Dodd, however, is pushing back at Bernanke's argument, noting that former Fed officials and others who have testified before his committee have made the opposite point—that bank supervision and monetary policy are not related.

Obama tells Congress: Act soon on financial reform

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. needs major changes to its financial system so consumers are better protected, banks fortified and the economy safeguarded from sliding into another Depression, President Barack Obama said Saturday.

In his weekly radio and Internet address, Obama told Congress to act quickly and pass "commonsense rules that will our allow markets to function fairly and freely while reining in the worst practices of the financial industry."

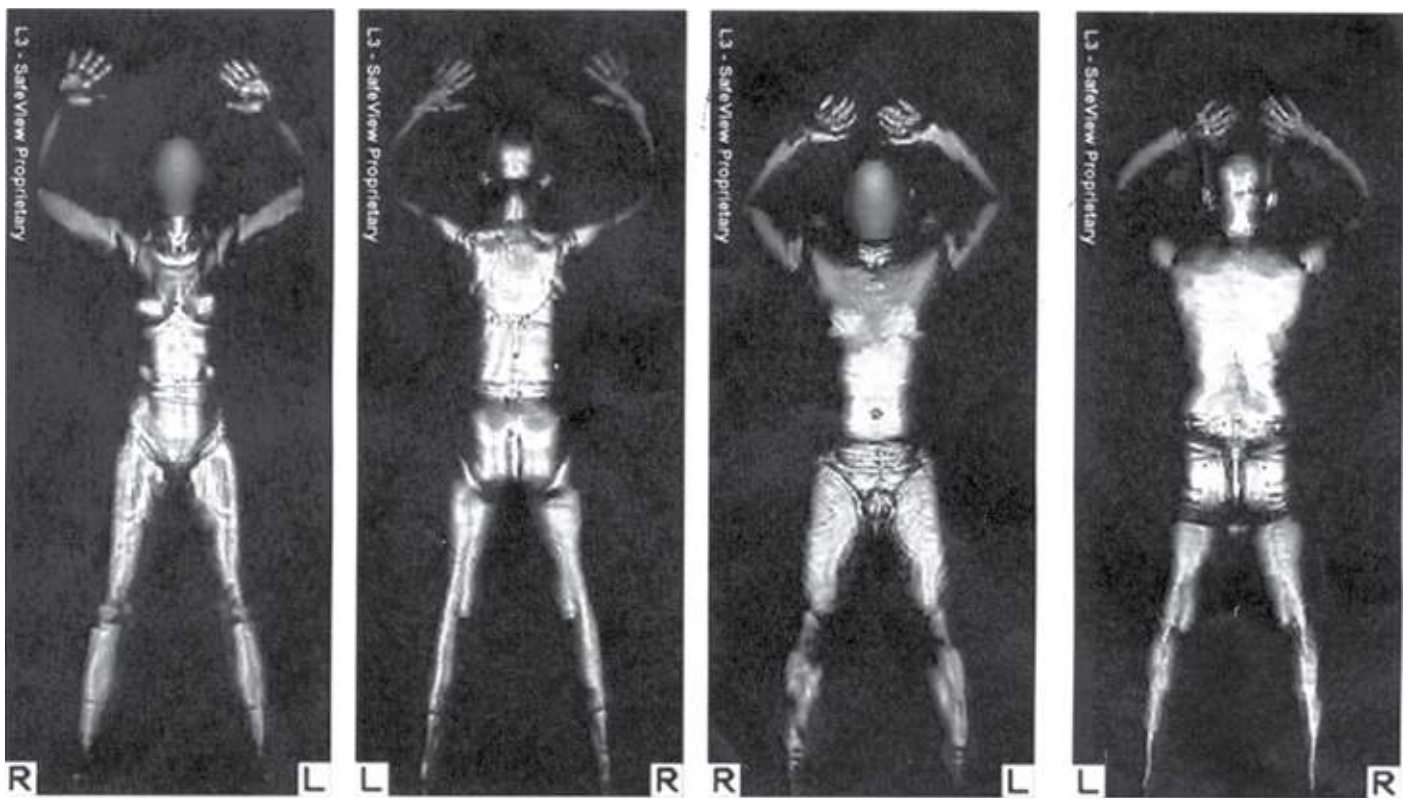
That, he said, is the central lesson of the current financial crisis that has cost millions of Americans their jobs and nearly caused the collapse of the entire financial system.

"And we fail to heed that lesson at our peril," Obama said.

The Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee is set to begin debate Monday on legislation from its chairman, Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., that would give the government unprecedented powers to split up big financial firms, force the industry to pay for its most spectacular failures and create an independent consumer watchdog.

Obama made a strong pitch for that agency, a chief point of disagreement between Democrats and Republicans. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has launched a $3 million campaign against that provision.

"I won't accept any attempts to undermine the independence of this agency," Obama said.



WAVE MACHINE

AP

This image provided by L3 Communications shows two full-body scans using a ProVision millimeter wave machine.

Letter: Lehman accounting tricks possibly illegal

NEW YORK (AP)—A Lehman Brothers whistleblower warned his bosses that accounting gimmicks the bank used before its collapse may have been illegal, his lawyer said Friday.

Matthew Lee, a former Lehman senior vice president, was fired days after questioning the accounting tricks in a letter to his superiors, attorney Erwin Shustak said. Shustak gave a copy of the letter to The Associated Press.

Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. imploded in September 2008, becoming the biggest corporate bankruptcy in U.S. history. The collapse sent financial markets across the globe into a free-fall and prompted a massive bailout of the U.S. banking system.

An examiner appointed by the bankruptcy court said in a 2,200-page report last week that Lehman hid its debt and perilous financial condition by using an accounting gimmick called Repo 105. The report revealed Lee's warnings to the bank, though his letter makes public the first internal assessment of the legality of Lehman's bookkeeping.

In a letter dated May 18, 2008, Lee wrote that he discovered that the bank had been underreporting its debt by about $5 billion at the end of each month. Lee, a 14-year Lehman veteran, wrote that he felt compelled to report the "discrepancies" under the firm's code of ethics, saying he believed they "possibly constitute unethical or unlawful conduct."

Thousands of BA flights canceled as crew on strike

LONDON (AP)—Retiree Richard Moore arrived at Heathrow with a suitcase of summer clothes for a Miami cruise only to be sent to Denver. Susan Danby wondered if plans for a joint 50th birthday celebration in Las Vegas would be a losing bet.

The start of a three-day strike by cabin crew at British Airways spurred chaos and passenger angst on Saturday as union members promised more airline and rail walkouts in the coming weeks as Britain prepares for a hotly contested general election.

"This is our dream trip, we booked it last August and we've been planning it for years," said Danby, who was still hoping to get to Las Vegas with her friends. "We all want more money and better conditions, but people shouldn't ruin other people's holidays."

BA's cabin crew are disputing a pay freeze and changes to working conditions. Their Unite union also says BA didn't inform it of cost-cutting plans.

BA said it would handle as many as 49,000 passengers on both Saturday and Sunday. That compares with the average 75,000 for a normal weekend day in March. At its Heathrow base, more than 60 percent of long-haul flights were operating, but only 30 percent of short-haul. At Gatwick, all long-haul flights and more than half short-haul flights were running as normal, as were flights from London City airport, including flights to New York.

The public backlash is bad news for Prime Minister Gordon Brown's Labour Party, which relies heavily on funding from the country's labor unions, and a gift for the main opposition Conservative Party, which is leading opinion polls ahead of a general election due within weeks.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

India unexpectedly hikes rates a quarter point

MUMBAI, India (AP)—India's central bank has unexpectedly hiked key interest rates a quarter of a percentage point, as the bank tries to cool high inflation amid a faster-than-expected economic rebound. The bank raised the benchmark repo rate—at which the central bank makes short-term loans to commercial banks—to 5 percent and raised the reverse repurchase rate—the rate at which it borrows from commercial banks—to 3.5 percent, with immediate effect. "These measures should anchor inflationary expectations and contain inflation going forward," the Reserve Bank of India said in a statement after trading hours Friday. "As liquidity in the banking system will remain adequate, credit expansion for sustaining the recovery will not be affected." Most economists had expected a rate hike, but not until the bank's scheduled policy meeting on April 20.

Lawmakers wnt to limit txt msgs and e-mails

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Open government in the heart of Silicon Valley is starting to mean turn off, tune out, power down. When the San Jose City Council meets just miles from the Apple and Google campuses, its members shut down all portable electronic devices, as though they were in a theater. If they're on and they get a text or e-mail from a lobbyist or anyone discussing city business, they must say so right then and there. Experts say San Jose's policy is a model for open government in the digital age. Other cities and state legislatures are adopting their own rules at a time when officials are increasingly fielding requests for lawmakers' cellphone records, e-mails and text messages.

Stocks fall as worries about Greek debt return

NEW YORK (AP)—Stocks halted their steady climb Friday after renewed concerns about Greece's ability to pay its debts left investors questioning a global economic recovery. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 37 points after advancing for eight straight days. Broader indexes also fell. Major indexes posted gains for the week. Greece said it might need to turn to the International Monetary Fund for support if European leaders can't agree on a bailout plan next week. Worries about the country's ability to handle its massive debt load have set off periodic bouts of stock selling in the U.S. and overseas over the past two months.

Nation

Thousands rally to pull troops from 2 war zones

WASHINGTON (AP)—Thousands of protesters—many directing their anger squarely at President Barack Obama—marched through the nation's capital Saturday to urge immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

At least eight people, including activist Cindy Sheehan, were arrested by U.S. Park Police at the end of the march, after laying coffins at a fence outside the White House. Friday marked the seventh anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

"Arrest that war criminal!" Sheehan shouted outside the White House before her arrest, referring to Obama.

At a rally before the march, Sheehan asked whether "the honeymoon was over with that war criminal in the White House"—an apparent reference to Obama—prompting moderate applause.

The protesters defied orders to clear the sidewalk on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House and park police say they face charges of failure to obey a lawful order.

Activist Ralph Nader told thousands who gathered in Lafayette Park across from the White House that Obama has essentially continued the policies of the Bush administration, and it was foolish to have thought otherwise.

"He's kept Guantanamo open, he's continued to use indefinite detention," Nader said. The only real difference, he said is that "Obama's speeches are better."

AP

Anti-war protesters march through Washington, on Saturday, March 20, 2010. Thousands of protesters marched through Washington to protest the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on the seventh anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.

Others were more conciliatory toward Obama. Shirley Allan of Silver Spring, Md., carried a sign that read, "President Obama We love you but we need to tell you! Your hands are getting bloody!! Stop it now."

Allan thought it was going too far to call Obama a war criminal but said she is deeply disappointed that the conflicts are continuing.

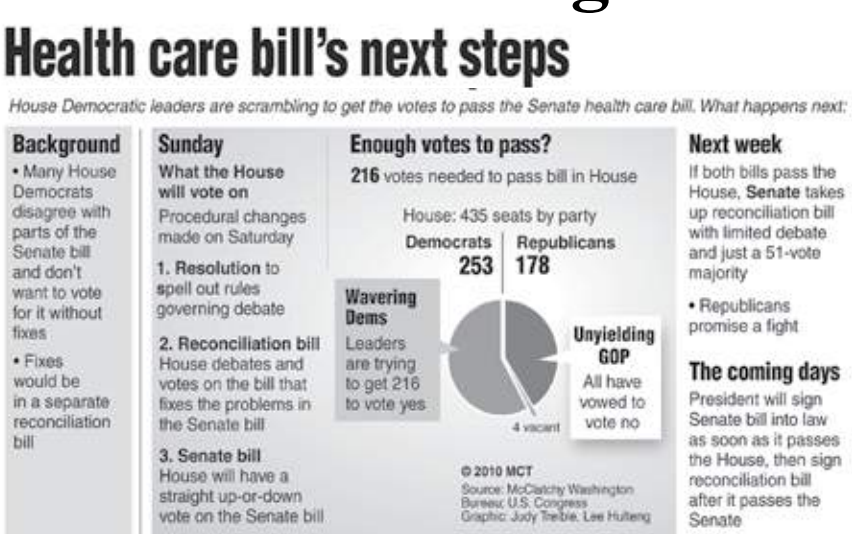
"He has to know it's unacceptable," Allan said. "I am absolutely disappointed."

The protest drew a smaller crowd than the tens of thousands who marched in 2006 and 2007. Protests in cities around the country also had far fewer participants than in the past.

Obama urges Dems to come together for health care

WASHINGTON (AP)—Victory within reach, President Barack Obama exhorted House Democrats on Saturday to stay true to their party's legacy and make history by bringing health insurance to millions of struggling families now left out. Leaders exuded confidence as they defused thorny problems in the countdown to a landmark vote.

Obama evoked Abraham Lincoln's moral compass and extolled Democratic achievements such as Social Security and Medicare—once controversial, now an essential part of the social fabric—on a day marked by a frenetic hunt for votes inside the Capitol and angry tea party demonstrations at the door. Some protesters hurled racial insults at black members of Congress.


Health care bill's next steps
House Democratic leaders are scrambling to get the votes to pass the Senate health care bill. What happens next:
Background
• Many House Democrats disagree with parts of the Senate bill and don't want to vote for it without fixes
• Fixes would be in a separate reconciliation bill
Sunday
What the House will vote on
Procedural changes made on Saturday
1. Resolution to spell out rules governing debate
2. Reconciliation bill House debates and votes on the bill that fixes the problems in the Senate bill
3. Senate bill House will have a straight up-or-down vote on the Senate bill
Enough votes to pass?
216 votes needed to pass bill in House
House: 435 seats by party
Democrats 253
Republicans 178
Wavering Dems
Leaders are trying to get 216 to vote yes
Unyielding GOP
All have vowed to vote no
4 vacant
© 2010 MCT
Source: McClatchy Washington Bureau; U.S. Congress
Graphic: Judy Treible, Lee Hulteng
Next week
If both bills pass the House, Senate takes up reconciliation bill with limited debate and just a 51-vote majority
• Republicans promise a fight
The coming days
President will sign Senate bill into law as soon as it passes the House, then sign reconciliation bill after it passes the Senate

"Is this the single most important step that we have taken on health care since Medicare?" Obama asked rank-and-file Democrats far from the chanting crowds. "Absolutely. Is this the most important piece of domestic legislation, in terms of giving a break to hard working, middle-class families out there since Medicare? Absolutely.

"It is in your hands," Obama said, bringing lawmakers to their feet. "It is time to pass health care reform for America and I am confident that you are going to do it tomorrow."

Police: Boy, 16, made racial comment at NJ Walmart

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, N.J. (AP)—A 16-year-old boy who police said made an announcement at Walmart ordering all black people in a southern New Jersey store to leave was charged with harassment and bias intimidation, authorities said Saturday.

The boy, whose name is not being released because he is a juvenile, grabbed one of the courtesy phones at Walmart's Washington Township store Sunday evening and calmly announced: "Attention, Walmart customers: All black people, leave the store now," police said.

The teen was arrested Friday and released to the custody of his parents; police did not know whether he had a lawyer.

"This was an extremely disturbing event on many levels," Gloucester County Prosecutor Sean Dalton said at a news conference. "Any statements like these that can cause harm or grave concern must be addressed as quickly we possibly can."

Dalton said the case would be handled in juvenile court in neighboring Atlantic County, where the boy lives. He would not say whether the boy has a criminal record, citing the teen's age, and would not disclose the teen's race, saying that did not factor into the investigation.

Fargo calm, confident as Red River completes rise

FARGO, N.D. (AP)—They passed out cigars in Fargo on Saturday, but no matches just yet, as a flood-weary city that's spent the last week getting ready to hold back the Red River cautiously prepared to celebrate what appeared to be a successful defense against the swollen waterway.

The river continued to inch upward toward an expected crest Sunday a few feet below last year's record, to be followed by a quick and steady drop. As they waited, Fargo's residents turned their attention to cleaning up debris in low-lying neighborhoods where more than a million sandbags held back the waters, with some taking a break for basketball.

"Last year I was not sleeping well. This year I am sleeping like a baby," said Fargo resident Kevin Pladson, who last year counted on mounds of sandbags to keep the river away from his back deck. This year, the water isn't close. "I'm relaxing and watching as much of the NCAA tournament as I can."

The easygoing mood stood in stark contrast to last year, when floods along the north-flowing Red River sparked a last-minute frenzy of sandbagging that brought life to a halt and forced thousands to evacuate.

This year, residents in Fargo and neighboring Moorhead, Minn., were calm as the river completed a rise driven by the spring thaw of a thick snowpack: they walked their dogs, went shopping and worked out at the gym. At one mobile command center on the Minnesota side of the river, the focus early Saturday was on breakfast instead of levee breaks as sheriff's deputies spent the morning cooking deer sausage.

"It's been actually quite relaxing, compared to last year," said Fargo resident Jim Papacek.

Papacek had been so worried earlier this year about the prospect of flooding that he rented an apartment on higher ground away from the river and moved much of his furniture into it, just in case he had to evacuate. But on Saturday, the retired teacher sat in his mostly empty living room looking out at the river, which had flooded part of his yard but hadn't reached his house.

ACROSS THE NATION

3 killed after small planes collide over Fla.

WILLISTON, Fla. (AP)—A single-engine plane and a kit-built aircraft collided in clear, sunny skies Saturday over central Florida, killing three people, authorities said. A Williston woman who thought she heard a gunshot discovered the kit-built plane upside down in a field near her house and called authorities, Levy Sheriff's Office Capt. Evan Sullivan. When emergency responders arrived, they found a second plane engulfed in flames in a dense wooded area several hundred yards away. "The fire was extremely intense and at the area of the Piper 32 crash an oak tree caught on fire some 40 feet above ground," Sullivan said.

SoCal restaurant accused of serving whale closes

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Santa Monica sushi restaurant accused of serving illegal and endangered whale meat is closing its doors. A statement posted on the restaurant's Web site, thehump.biz, says it's voluntarily closing its doors on Saturday. A sushi chef at the high-end restaurant allegedly was caught serving whale meat. Typhoon Restaurant Inc., the parent company of The Hump, and the chef were each charged with illegally selling an endangered species product, a misdemeanor. Gary S. Lincenberg, an attorney for Typhoon, has said the restaurant accepted responsibility for the wrongdoing.

Boy Scouts sex abuse files now evidence in lawsuit

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—The Boy Scouts of America call them "perversion files," internal documents used to track Scout leaders suspected of sexually abusing young boys. A judge who had ordered the Scouts to release them received 1,247 files into evidence near the end of the day Friday—the third day of trial that began with a lawyer saying "you will be the first jury to see them." Attorneys Paul Mones and Kelly Clark won the release of files from 1965-85 to help them make the case in a $14 million lawsuit against the Boy Scouts filed by a 37-year-old Oregon man. He was sexually molested in the early 1980s by assistant Scoutmaster Timur Dykes, who was convicted three times between 1983 and 1994 of sexually abusing boys, most of them Scouts.

Asia

Thai protesters' caravan wends through capital

BANGKOK (AP)—A crimson tide of protesters snaked its way through the Thai capital Saturday, with thousands of cars, trucks and motorbikes tangling up traffic as demonstrators sought to drum up support for ousting a government they call illegitimate.

The festive caravan of as many as 100,000 "Red Shirt" protesters is to be followed up Sunday with the group making a giant painting from their own blood, the latest shock tactic in their weeklong campaign to force Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva to dissolve Parliament and call new elections.

The day's good mood was marred by two small explosions Saturday night that appeared linked to the political battle. At least one person was reported wounded by what police said was a grenade tossed near the Defense Ministry. Damage was minor at the site and at the new office of the country's National Anti-Corruption Commission.

The raucous procession, which wound its way over 40 miles (70 kilometers), was met with curious and often sympathetic crowds, revealing a level of support in the capital that the conventional wisdom of the Thai press had underestimated.

"I haven't seen any opposition from Bangkok people. People were thankful. They came to cheer us from all walks of life," said Kotchawan Pim-ngern, 40, a flower seller, on a pickup truck. "They all want democracy back."

Not everyone was pleased. Some hecklers held signs saying the demonstrators, many of whom came from rural areas, were not welcome. Thai television stations said a bottle was tossed at one protest leader as he drove by.

The caravan stretched at times at least six miles (10 kilometers) along Bangkok's streets, and Vichai Sangparpai, a commander in the Metropolitan Police, estimated the number of participants at 100,000, though the department later gave a figure of 65,000 people traveling on 10,000 motorcycles and 7,000 cars and trucks.

AP

An anti-government demonstrator gives snack to Thai soldiers at China Town in Bangkok, Thailand, Saturday March 20, 2010.

"Each side, each political party has a lot of support," Abhisit said Saturday. "The issue is not about showing numbers or strength in some kind of demonstration. It's about how we can solve the differences to the best interests of the country."

The protesters consist of supporters of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted by a 2006 military coup for alleged corruption, and pro-democracy activists who opposed the army takeover.

Pakistan tribal council: Army must destroy Taliban

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Hundreds of tribesmen from Pakistan's semiautonomous regions near the Afghan border ended a rare tribal council meeting Saturday with a declaration calling for the army to crush the Taliban.

The meeting, held in the northwestern city of Peshawar, was called by an umbrella group of aid organizations and political parties in an effort to bring together people from the violence-battered region.

Participants called for the army to escalate its attack against the network of Islamist militants across the tribal regions, dismissing Pakistan's earlier offensives as "military dramas."

"It should be a genuine military operation like the Sri Lankans did against the Tamil Tigers," said Sayd Alam Mehsud, a powerful tribal leader, referring to the brutal military campaign that destroyed the separatist Tamil army in Sri Lanka.

They also called for more power for traditional councils.

"If we strengthen these councils and make them more functional, I believe it will win us half of the war," said one participant, Salar Amjad Ali, 34. "We, the Pashtuns, live for our culture and tradition and we die for it."

Tribal councils—or "jirgas"—play a central role in the Pashtun culture that dominates the region along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. These often-lawless regions, havens for al-Qaida and Taliban fighters, have been the scene of bloody fighting and regular attacks by American drone aircraft as the Pakistani and U.S. governments try to defeat the Islamist militants. Smaller council meetings are used in tribal areas to decide matters ranging from local administration to criminal cases.

Clerics tell Filipino Muslims to reject Estrada

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Islamic clerics have called on Filipino Muslims not to support former President Joseph Estrada's bid to return to power in elections in May.

The separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front said on its Web site Saturday that the Bangsamoro Supreme Council of Ulama had studied Estrada's actions and policies before and after his election and had issued a fatwa, or religious edict, concluding that "he is really an enemy of Islam."

Estrada was elected president in 1998. The edict said his "all-out war" policy against the separatists in 2000 caused widespread destruction and displacement of up to 1 million Muslims from their communities in the southern Philippines.

Responding to the edict, Estrada's spokeswoman, Margaux Salcedo, said the former president "is a friend of Islam, not an enemy of Muslims."

She said the military operations against the rebels were meant to achieve peace on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao "so that Christians and Muslims could live in peace side by side."

Estrada

"President Estrada is only appealing to the (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), to those who insist on secessionism and use terrorism, abductions and havoc to pursue this secessionist movement, to please allow peace to be achieved in Mindanao," she said.

The fatwa was read at a rally in the southern Muslim city of Marawi on March 9, according to Lacs Dalidig, head of the Islamic Movement on Electoral Reform and Good Governance and one of the organizers of the rally.

The Ulama council has been sympathetic to the rebels in the past. Rebel spokesman Eid Kabalu said the separatist group respects the Muslim clerics' fatwa.

The rebel group will not openly campaign for or against anyone running for office, "but nothing can prevent us from urging our members to go for a certain candidate," he said.

Estrada was ousted in a popular revolt in 2001 and later convicted of plunder. He was pardoned by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo weeks later.

Recent public opinion surveys for the May 10 balloting put Estrada in third place behind Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III of the Liberal Party and Sen. Manuel Villar of the Nacionalista Party.

The fatwa also included Sen. Manuel Roxas II, Aquino's vice presidential running mate, and party leader Franklin Drilon, who is seeking to return to the Senate. Roxas leads in the vice presidential race, according to the surveys.

The fatwa said Roxas and Drilon opposed a preliminary peace deal between the rebels and Arroyo's government in 2008. The deal was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, triggering attacks by the rebels against Christian communities on Mindanao.

Tokyo marks 15th anniversary of subway gas attack

TOKYO (AP)—Tokyo subway workers observed a moment of silence Saturday to mark the 15th anniversary of a nerve gas attack by a religious cult, Japan's deadliest act of domestic terrorism.

About 20 employees at Kasumigaseki station in Tokyo's government district bowed their heads in silent prayer at 8 a.m., when members of the cult released sarin nerve gas in rush-hour trains on March 20, 1995. The five coordinated attacks killed 13 people and sickened 6,300 others.

Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama joined victims and families in paying his respects, bowing deeply in front of an flower-laden alter.

Transport Minister Seiji Maehara said he would institute more anti-terrorism measures to ensure a secure public transportation system. Tokyo's subway is the world's busiest, carrying some 8.5 million riders a day.

"I pledge to work hard, without letting the memory (of the sarin gas attack) fade," Maehara said.

Before the attack, the Aum Shinrikyo cult had amassed an arsenal of chemical, biological and conventional weapons in anticipation of an apocalyptic showdown with the government. More than a dozen death sentences have been imposed on its members, but no one has been executed.

Former Aum guru Shoko Asahara is on death row for 27 killings, including those in the subway attack. He was also convicted of plotting more than a dozen other crimes, including a 1994 gas attack in central Japan that killed seven and the kidnapping and murder of an anti-cult lawyer and his family.

Among family members attending Saturday's remembrance was Shizue Takahashi, 63, who lost her husband in the attacks and helped spearhead efforts to secure government compensation for victims. After helping pull victims from a train, subway worker Kazumasa Takahashi took a broom and a dustpan and started cleaning up a puddle of clear liquid—later identified as sarin. The liquid had spilled from a plastic bag by the door of one of the cars. He was dead minutes later.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Pakistan's poverty pushes its children to work

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Abbas Sajeet is 11 years old, but he doesn't go to school. Instead, he earns 2,500 rupees ($30) a month as an auto mechanic in the Pakistani capital, Islamabad. The money goes straight into the meager coffers of his seven-member family. "Every day from the car garage, I see children walking to their schools," he says. "I wish I could go to school with them, finish high school and study engineering. After that, I would have a good job with a lot of money, and give it to my mother." At least 10 million children are believed to be working in Pakistan at a variety of jobs, including some of the hardest and most poorly-paid.

Nepal leader who helped end king's rule dies at 86

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—Girija Prasad Koirala, Nepal's former prime minister who led mass protests that ended the king's authoritarian rule and helped deliver a peace deal to end 10 years of communist revolt, died Saturday. He was 86. The Maoist former rebel leader called Koirala's death an "irreparable loss" to the ongoing peace process, which has been stalled since political parties have not been able to decide on the fate of the thousands of Maoist former rebel fighters who have been confined to United Nations-monitored camps for years. Koirala's daughter, Deputy Prime Minister Sujata Koirala, said her father was worried about the country in the last days of his life and tried work out an agreement between the political parties.

Power cut to 60,000 as cyclone hits Australia

AIRLIE BEACH, Australia (AP)—About 60,000 homes are without power, trees and signs have blown over and boats have been smashed on the rocks after a massive storm blew across the coast of northeastern Australia. Tropical Cyclone Ului crossed the coast at Airlie Beach as a category three storm early Sunday with winds up to 124 miles (200 kilometers) per hour. A dozen boats were washed onto the rocks at Airlie Beach, but businesses on the main street escaped any significant damage. The Bureau of Meteorology said the storm has since been downgraded to category two as it continues inland, dumping heavy rain and still blowing strongly.

World

Papal letter fails to calm anger over Irish abuses

DUBLIN (AP)—Pope Benedict XVI's unprecedented letter to Ireland apologizing for chronic child abuse within the Catholic Church failed Saturday to calm the anger of many victims, who accused the Vatican of ducking its own responsibility in promoting a worldwide culture of cover-up.

Benedict's message—the product of weeks of consultation with Irish bishops, who read it aloud at Masses across this predominantly Catholic nation—rebuked Ireland's church leaders for "grave errors of judgment" in failing to observe the church's secretive canon laws.

The pope, who himself stands accused of approving the transfer of an accused priest for treatment rather than informing German police during his 1977-82 term as Munich archbishop, suggested that child-abusing priests could have been expelled quickly had Irish bishops applied the church's own laws correctly. He pledged a church inspection of unspecified dioceses and orders in Ireland to ensure their child-protection policies were effective.

He also appealed to priests still harboring sins of child molestation to confess.

"Openly acknowledge your guilt, submit yourselves to the demands of justice, but do not despair of God's mercy," he wrote.

AP

In this file photo taken Monday Nov. 26, 2007, Pope Benedict XVI, in white, is greeted by Cardinal Sean Brady of Ireland, during an audience with newly-elevated cardinals in the Paul VI hall at The Vatican.

But Benedict offered no endorsement of three official Irish investigations that found the church leadership to blame for the scale and longevity of abuse heaped on Irish children throughout the 20th century.

The Vatican refused to cooperate with those 2001-09 probes into the Dublin Archdiocese, the rural Ferns diocese and Ireland's defunct network of workhouse-style dormitory schools for the Irish poor.

The investigations, directed by senior Irish judges and lawyers, ruled that Catholic leaders protected the church's reputation from scandal at the expense of children—and began passing their first abuse reports to police in 1996 only after victims began to sue the church.

Nor did Benedict's letter mention recent revelations of abuse cover-ups in a growing list of European nations, particularly his German homeland, where more than 300 claimants this year have alleged abuse in Catholic schools and a choir long run by the pope's brother.

In the latest development, the leader of the German Bishops Conference apologized Saturday for failing to protect children adequately from a pedophile priest in the early 1990s in his diocese of Freiburg. Archbishop Robert Zollitsch, who was in charge of human resources and staffing at the time, said he should have done more to investigate the priest, who was forced into retirement in 1991 and committed suicide four years later when fresh complaints arose.

Rights campaigners in Ireland and abroad forecast that more victims in more nations will keep coming forward and opening new fronts of criticism, because the pope's promotion of secretive canon laws remains at the heart of an unsolved problem.

"We know this policy of secrecy was worldwide. The more that victims speak out, the more the scandals will spread," said Marie Collins, who was repeatedly raped by a Dublin priest while aged 13 and hospitalized in 1960. Her attacker wasn't removed from the priesthood and imprisoned until 1997.

Squeeze Israel by cutting US aid? Not likely

JERUSALEM (AP)—The diplomatic crisis between the U.S. and Israel has sent a tremor through their alliance, but one key part of the bond seems virtually untouchable: the roughly $3 billion a year in U.S. military aid.

Israel's harsher critics often call for aid cuts to twist Israel's arm. Yet amid the uproar of recent days over plans to build 1,600 new homes for a Jewish neighborhood in a disputed part of Jerusalem, there has been no serious talk of using aid as a club.

One reason may be the potential backlash from Israel's supporters in the U.S. Another is that the overwhelming part of the money cycles back into the American economy.

Israel is the biggest recipient of American aid after Afghanistan. But unlike most other countries, Israel's aid is earmarked entirely for military spending. Under an agreement between the two allies, at least three-quarters of the aid must be spent with U.S. companies.

This means that the "close, unshakable bond," as Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton described it, is also a mutually beneficial one: Israel gets the latest American military technology, and American weapons makers—Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Boeing and others—get a steady stream of income.

The U.S. stepped up funding to Israel after the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973, at a time when the Soviet Union was arming the Arabs. Following the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, Washington guaranteed Israel would continue receiving annual military and civilian aid in a 3:2 ratio with aid given to Egypt. Since then, Israel's share has ranged between $2.1 billion and $3.7 billion a year.

Over the last decade, as Israel's economy has grown, the U.S. has converted the whole package to military funding, under an agreement to have it at $3.15 billion a year by fiscal 2013 and keep it at that level until 2018.

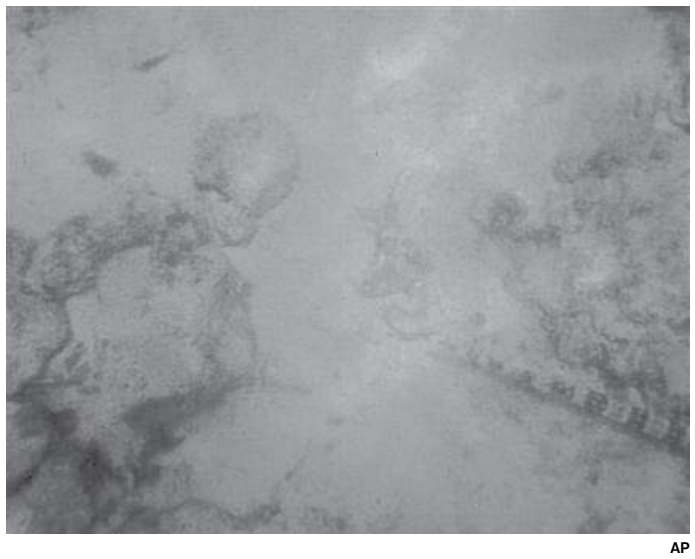
Mexico's drug war takes growing toll on Americans

MEXICO CITY (AP)—More Americans in Mexico are falling victim to a wave of drug violence sweeping the country, a change driven home by the recent killing of a U.S. Consulate employee and her husband who were gunned down after leaving a children's birthday party.

The number of U.S. citizens killed in Mexico has more than doubled to 79 in 2009 from 35 in 2007, according to the U.S. State Department's annual count. No figures were available for the first two months of 2010.

While only some of the killings are specifically listed as "executions" or "drug-related," the increase in homicides appears to be related to drug battles. In Ciudad Juarez, the northern border city hardest hit by drug violence and where the consulate employee was killed, homicides of Americans rose to 23 in 2009 from two in 2007.

The annual murder rate for the estimated 500,000 American citizens in Mexico at any one time has risen—but still remains lower than in some U.S. cities: about 15 per 100,000. Baltimore's 2009 homicide rate was 37 per 100,000 residents.



AP

In this October 2009 underwater photo provided by John F. Muldowney, is shown a portion of the ocean floor off the coast of Aruba.

New tip leads Aruba to search for missing US teen

ORANJESTAD, Aruba (AP)—Authorities will search once again for a missing U.S. teen after an American couple took an underwater picture of what they believe might be Natalee Holloway's remains, a spokeswoman for the prosecutors' office told The Associated Press on Saturday. A police diving team will soon do preliminary work at the spot where officials believe the picture was taken, spokeswoman Ann Angela said.

It is too early to say whether the tip is more viable than the other numerous ones authorities have received, Angela said.

"It could be a skull, it could be a stone, it could be anything," she said. "That's what we're trying to figure out."

The couple cannot pinpoint the exact location, but a local resident believes he can find the spot, Angela said.

"We are a very small island with lots of people diving or snorkeling, so it's not unusual for one of us to see an underwater picture and recognize the location."

Angela said she could not reveal where or when the dive would take place so as not to attract onlookers.

On Thursday, a newspaper in Pennsylvania reported that a photo taken last fall by the visiting couple, John and Patti Muldowney, of Manheim, Pa., had been turned over to the FBI.

No one answered calls Saturday to a telephone number listed for the couple.

The search is one of many that authorities have launched to find Holloway's body since the Mountain Brook, Alabama, teen disappeared while on vacation in Aruba in 2005. The 18-year-old was last seen leaving a bar with Joran van der Sloot on the final night of a high school graduation trip.

WORLD BRIEFS

Volcano erupts in Iceland; hundreds evacuated

REYKJAVIK, Iceland (AP)—Authorities evacuated hundreds of people after a volcano erupted beneath a glacier in southern Iceland, Iceland's civil protection agency said Sunday. The eruption occurred around 11:30 p.m. Saturday (1930 EDT) beneath the Eyjafjallajokull glacier, the fifth largest glacier in Iceland.The volcano is covered by an ice cap. Fearing flooding from the glacier melt, authorities evacuated some 400 people in the area 160 kilometers (100 miles) southeast of the capital, Reykjavik, as a precaution but no damage or injuries have been reported, said Vidir Reynisson, the department manager for the Icelandic Civil Protection Department.

Colombian journalist slain in militia stronghold

BOGOTA (AP)—The killing of a veteran radio reporter by a motorcycle gunman in a northwestern state capital reignited concerns Saturday about the safety of journalists in Colombia. Clodomiro Castilla, a reporter and announcer at La Voz de Monteria radio, was gunned down on his front porch Friday night, said Jaime Cuervo, a judicial investigator in Cordoba state. Castilla, a 50-year-old father of four, had reported on far-right drug-funded militias known as paramilitaries and their friendly ties to the area's business elite. Cordoba has long been a paramilitary stronghold. Police had no immediate suspects in the killing and offered a $26,000 reward for leads. Castilla's employer said he had received threats and was assigned bodyguards for two years until last year.

With cheap food imports, Haiti can't feed itself

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—The earthquake not only smashed markets, collapsed warehouses and left more than 2.5 million people without enough to eat. It may also have shaken up the way the developing world gets food. Decades of inexpensive imports—especially rice from the U.S.—punctuated with abundant aid in various crises have destroyed local agriculture and left impoverished countries such as Haiti unable to feed themselves. While those policies have been criticized for years in aid worker circles, world leaders focused on fixing Haiti are admitting for the first time that loosening trade barriers has only exacerbated hunger in Haiti and elsewhere.

Health & Fitness

WHO: Not sure if drug-resistant TB is worsening

By MARIA CHENG
AP MEDICAL WRITER

LONDON (AP)—The World Health Organization says it doesn't have enough information to know if it is winning the fight against drug-resistant tuberculosis.

In a new report on the global status of drug-resistant TB based on data from 2008, the agency says almost half of all people with the disease are in China and India, with both countries reporting about 100,000 new cases each.

High rates of drug-resistant TB strains were also seen in eastern Europe and central Asia, with up to 60 percent of people who already had TB in some parts of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan developing drug-resistant versions.

About 4 percent of all TB cases worldwide are thought to be non-responsive to the usual TB drugs. The agency estimated there were between 390,000 and 510,000 cases of drug-resistant TB in 2008, including about 150,000 people who were killed by the disease. But those numbers are based on modeling and come with a big margin of error.

The report is based on information from 35 countries worldwide, leaving a huge gap in the global TB picture.

"The country data reported to WHO make it impossible at this time to conclude whether the (drug-resistant TB) epidemic worldwide is growing or shrinking," the agency wrote in its report.

In the United States, the proportion of TB cases that are resistant to at least two first-line antibiotics remained stable in 2008, at less than 1 percent. And there were no cases that year of extensively drug-resistant TB, which is resistant to most available treatments, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC does not yet have data on drug-resistant TB for last year. But other, preliminary data indicate a historic drop in new tuberculosis cases of all kinds in 2009—the largest single-year decrease in more than 50 years of federal record keeping.

TB rates fell more than 11 percent in 2009, to 3.8 cases per 100,000 people. Generally, the annual decline is about 4 percent. CDC officials are investigating, but say it could be related to fewer cases coming in to the country through immigration.

Drug-resistant tuberculosis usually arises when people are poorly treated or take substandard medicines. It takes longer to treat than regular TB and requires more expensive drugs, which also cause bad side effects like liver damage.

In recent years, WHO and other health authorities have warned the collision of TB with the AIDS virus could fuel simultaneous epidemics—and asked for more money to fight both. In its latest report, however, the agency acknowledged there is little proof of that.

Again citing missing data, the agency says "it has not been possible to conclude whether an overall association between (drug-resistant) TB and HIV epidemics exists."

In Estonia, Latvia and Moldova, WHO said people infected with both HIV and TB were more likely to develop drug-resistant TB. But there is no information from many countries across Africa where the most people with HIV live.

Some health experts wondered why WHO's report failed to mention in detail one of the main drivers of drug resistance: bad medicines.

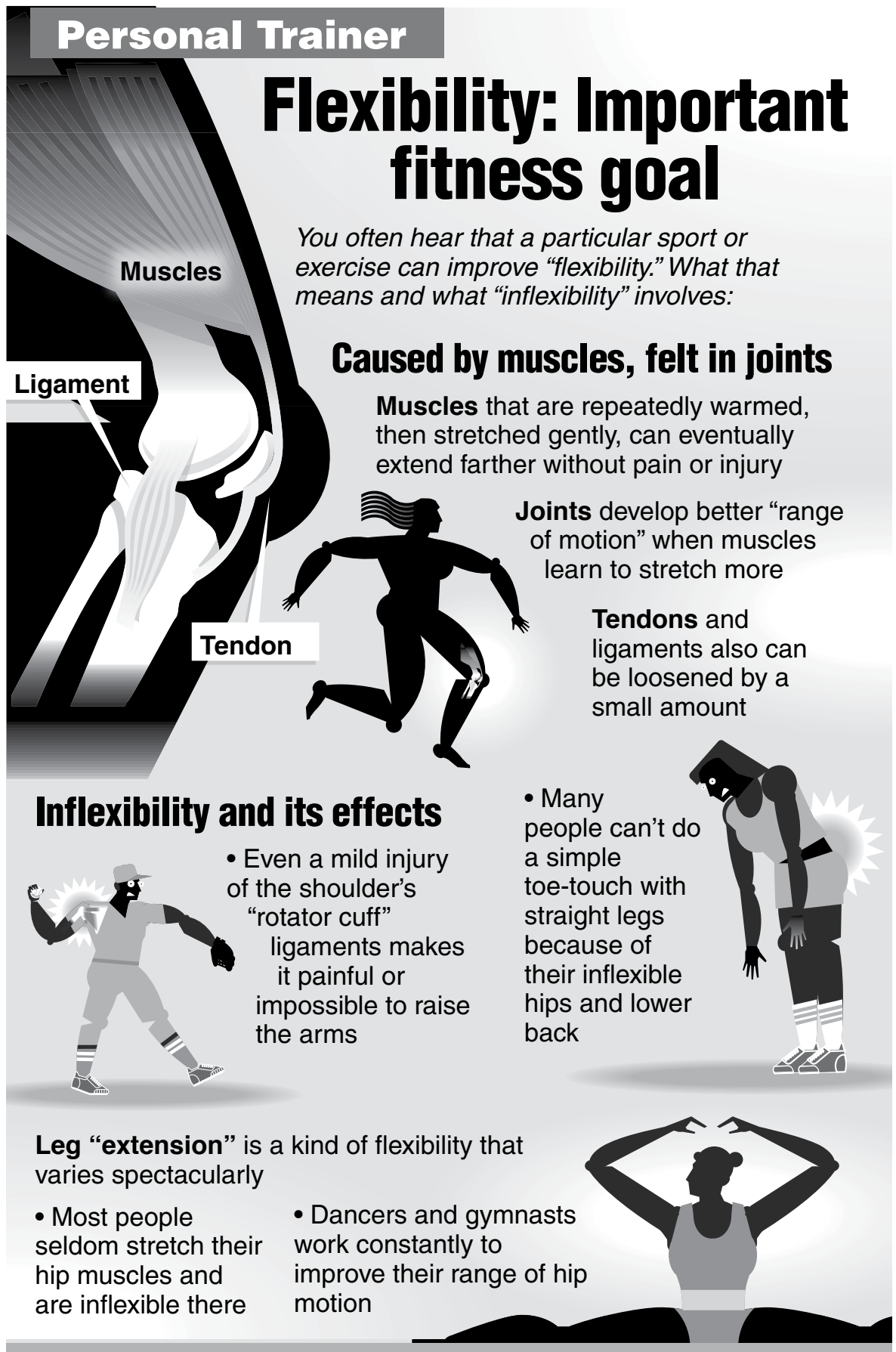
"Many substandard drugs are fakes, but we are also concerned about legitimately manufactured copies—mainly from India and China—which are not made to exacting high standards," said Philip Stevens, a health policy expert at the London think-tank International Policy Network.

Stevens said the lack of global TB data was troubling. "WHO doesn't really have a clue as to the true extent of the problem," he said. "It's difficult then, to start promoting targets and goals when you don't know what baseline you are starting from."

WHO reported rates of drug-resistant TB were dropping in some parts of Russia with previously large outbreaks.

"It's good news that it can be controlled even in those difficult regions," said Ruth McNerney, a TB expert at London's School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who was not connected to the report.

McNerney said that though progress was being made, authorities need more money to fight it, and more information about where the disease is striking. "We've got to find out where there are very serious problems, otherwise we won't know about it until it's too late."


Personal Trainer
Flexibility: Important fitness goal
You often hear that a particular sport or exercise can improve "flexibility." What that means and what "inflexibility" involves:
Muscles
Ligament
Tendon
Caused by muscles, felt in joints
Muscles that are repeatedly warmed, then stretched gently, can eventually extend farther without pain or injury
Joints develop better "range of motion" when muscles learn to stretch more
Tendons and ligaments also can be loosened by a small amount
Inflexibility and its effects
• Even a mild injury of the shoulder's "rotator cuff" ligaments makes it painful or impossible to raise the arms
• Many people can't do a simple toe-touch with straight legs because of their inflexible hips and lower back
Leg "extension" is a kind of flexibility that varies spectacularly
• Most people seldom stretch their hip muscles and are inflexible there
• Dancers and gymnasts work constantly to improve their range of hip motion
Source: Textbook of Anatomy and Physiology, Dancemagazine
Graphic: Paul Trap
© 2010 MCT

Testing overseas may explain big drop in TB cases

By MIKE STOBBE
AP MEDICAL WRITER

ATLANTA (AP)—An unexpected big drop in new U.S. tuberculosis cases is probably because of stepped up screening and treatment of immigrants before they leave their native countries, health officials say.

The nation's TB rate dropped more than 11 percent last year, the largest single-year decrease in more than 50 years of federal record keeping, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported this week. TB rates have been falling, but generally about 4 percent a year.

The drop was so steep that some experts are cautious about celebrating. While testing overseas may explain the decline, underdiagnosis and undertreatment could also be factors, the CDC said. A final report is due in the fall.

"This is provisional data and still needs to be scrutinized," said Dr. Michael Leonard, an Emory University infectious diseases specialist.

ON THE NET

The CDC report: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr

Screening changes made in 2007 call for more complete testing of prospective immigrants suspected of having TB. They also require screening of children younger than 15, who previously were not tested.

If TB is diagnosed, the changes ensure that immigrants receive at least six months of treatment and are no longer infectious before coming to the United States.

The CDC is trying to analyze immigrant infections before and after the 2007 changes.

Tuberculosis is caused by bacteria that usually attack the lungs, and is spread through the air when an infectious person coughs or sneezes. If not treated properly, TB can be fatal.

It once was a major cause of death and illness, and in the late 1800s killed one out of every seven people living in the United States and Europe. But the development of antibiotics and public health efforts succeeded in treating infections and tracking down those they infected.

Last year, 11,540 U.S. cases were reported, down from 12,904 the year before. About 60 percent of the cases were immigrants, legal and illegal. About half were from just four countries - Mexico, the Philippines, India and Vietnam. Cases from those countries have been falling.

The TB rate fell to 3.8 cases per 100,000 people, from 4.2 cases reported for 2008.

Health officials looked at other possible explanations for the overall decline, and discounted several of them.

For example, budget cuts at local health departments could mean that fewer cases are being detected and treated. But in the past, cuts in public health spending have caused TB rates to go up—not down.

More aggressive measures to identify and stop the spread of TB may be paying off, said Dr. Carla Winston, a CDC epidemiologist who was lead author of this week's report.

Life & Style

Court: Anna Nicole Smith gets none of oil fortune

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The elderly Texas billionaire who married Anna Nicole Smith in the last year of his life never intended to leave the former stripper any portion of his vast fortune, a federal appeals court ruled Friday.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with a Houston jury that said J. Howard Marshall was mentally fit and under no undue pressure when he wrote a will leaving nearly all of his $1.6 billion estate to his son E. Pierce Marshall and nothing to Smith.

The ruling was the latest development in the bitter 15-year legal battle. Smith said the elder Marshall promised her more than $300 million, even though there was no written documentation.

The fight between Smith and E. Pierce Marshall started in a sleepy Houston probate court and stretched all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court while outliving its two combatants.

It may reach the high court again.

Kent Richland, a lawyer for Smith's estate vowed to appeal the latest ruling, possibly to the Supreme Court on different issues than those it first considered.

"It really is a unique decision," Richland said. "We have to take it farther."

Pierce's widow and two sons said they hoped the legal battle was close to ending.

"Our only wish would be that Pierce were here to see his vindication," the family said in a prepared statement.

The decision—if it holds up—is bad news for Smith's exboyfriend Larry Birkhead and their 3-year-old daughter Dannielynn. The child was named Smith's heir in 2008 after she died of a drug overdose at 39 at a Florida hotel.

Birkhead and attorney Howard K. Stern were placed in charge of Smith's estate. Neither returned calls seeking comment.

Stern and two other people have pleaded not guilty to charges of conspiring to provide thousands of prescription pills to the former model before her death.

The convoluted dispute over J. Howard Marshall's money has its roots in a Houston strip club where he met Smith. The two were wed in 1994 when he was 89 and she 26. Marshall died the next year and his will left his estate to his son.

AP

In this undated file photo provided by temple Webber Photography, millionare J. Howard Marshall II is shown.

Smith challenged the will in a Houston probate court, alleging the billionaire's son illegally coerced his father to exclude the former Playboy model from sharing the estate. She alleged that her husband promised to leave her more than $300 million above the $7 million in cash and gifts showered on her during their 14-month marriage.

While the probate case was pending in Houston, Smith filed for bankruptcy in Los Angeles, alleging in federal court filings that her husband promised her a large share of the estate.

In late 2000, the bankruptcy court awarded Smith $474.75 million, which a federal district court judge reduced to $89.5 million in 2002.

Between those two decisions, a jury in the Houston probate court ruled in March 2001 against Smith. The jury found the billionaire was mentally fit and under no duress when he wrote out a will that left everything to his son.

Since then, the two sides have been fighting over which court to obey.

Smith argued that the federal courts were in charge because the bankruptcy court was the first to rule.

Pierce Marshall countered the decision was the jurisdiction of the probate court, because that's where the first legal action was filed and the site of the only full-blown trial.

"Every piece of evidence was considered and every witness exhaustively examined," said Eric Brunstad, the Marshall family's lawyer. "That really should have been the end of it."

On Friday, the unanimous three-judge panel said the bankruptcy court didn't have the authority to decide a probate dispute and thus its $474.75 million award was only an advisory opinion.

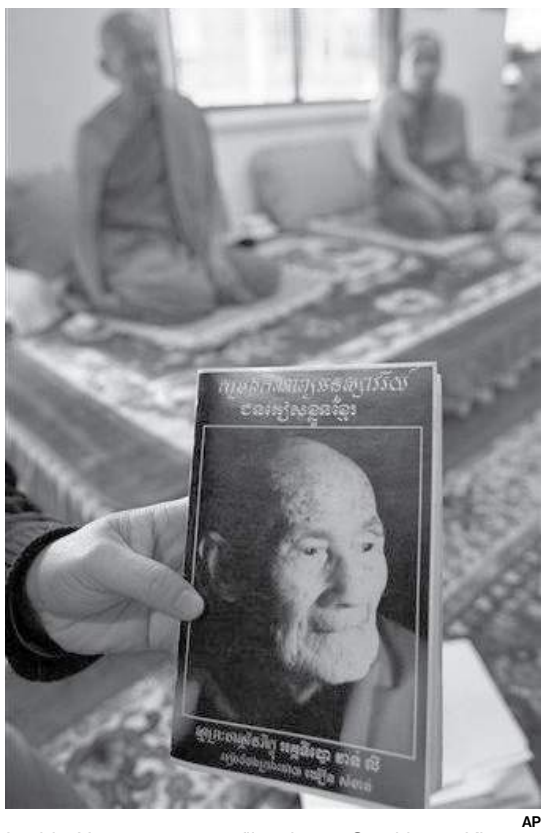
The appeals court also said U.S. District Court Judge David Carter should have relied on the probate jury's decision against Smith and tossed the case entirely instead of merely reducing the award to $89.5 million.

Late Mass. monk's poems recall Khmer Rouge horrors

LOWELL, Mass. (AP)—During Buddhist monk Ly Van Aggadipo's final days, he wrote often in a notebook. Temple followers knew the nonagenarian spiritual mentor to many local Cambodian refugees was recording some sort of personal history, but they weren't sure what.

"He told me, 'When I'm gone, make sure others read this so people don't forget what happened,'" follower Sokhar Sao said. "I didn't really understand until he was gone."

Next month, friends and followers will release a book of poetry by Ly Van, who survived the brutal communist Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia and later led the Glory Buddhist Temple in Lowell from 1988 until his death in January 2008. The book, entitled "O! Maha Mount Dangrek," is a collection of two lengthy poems: one an autobiographical piece on the horrors of the Khmer Rouge, the other about a friend's story of love in the time of genocide.



AP

In this Nov. 20, 2008 file photo, Samkhann Khoeun holds at the Glory Temple, in Lowell, Mass., a Khmer language manuscript of poetry by the Buddhist monk Ly Van Aggadipo that features his photo on the cover.

The title in English means "Oh Mighty Mount Dangrek" and refers to the mountainous plateau between the Cambodia-Thailand border that refugees were forced to climb in order to escape the Khmer Rouge regime.

Organizers plan a 14-city tour to promote the book with readings and accompanying musical performances by two young Cambodian artists. The tour will begin April 1 at a Middlesex Community College reading in Lowell and continue with stops in Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Paul, Minn., and Long Beach, Calif.

The publication of Ly Van's work, printed in its original Khmer and in English, completes a two-year project by followers. The day he died, a follower found the poetry tucked under stacks of old Buddhist texts inside the temple.

On worn pages were handwritten, carefully crafted poems describing Ly Van's memories of labor camps, starvation and infant executions and his dreams of escaping to America.

"We all said, 'Wow ... we have to publish this,'" said Samkhann Khoeun, who studied under Ly Van and served as the book's editor. "Here was something so beautiful describing something so horrible. It brought tears to our eyes."

Khoeun then went on a campaign to get the book published. The Glory Buddhist Temple and local nonprofit groups Light of Cambodian Children and Cambodian Expressions agreed to help with the publication cost, while Khoeun worked on translation with other refugees.

Ly Van was born in 1917 in a small Cambodian village where he and his family lived through the 1970s rule of the Khmer Rouge regime, which perpetrated one of the worst genocides of the 20th century.

FIRST YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory of

JOHN EDWARD UNTALAN

KNOWN AS "JOHNNY U"

We are inviting all our relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the First Year Death Anniversary of our Dearly Beloved Son, Cherished Brother, Devoted Husband and Loving Daddy.

Daily Mass of Intention will be Celebrated at

	San Jose Church (Tinian)	San Vicente Church (Saipan)
March 23 - Tuesday	6:00 AM	6:00 PM
March 24 - Wednesday	6:00 PM	6:00 PM
March 25 - Thursday	6:00 AM	6:00 PM
March 26 - Friday	6:00 PM	6:00 PM
March 27 - Saturday	6:00 AM & 6:00 PM	6:00PM
March 28 - Sunday	6:00 AM & 8:00 AM	6:00 PM
March 29 - Monday	6:00 PM	6:00 PM
March 30 - Tuesday	6:00 AM	6:00 PM

On the Final Day, March 31st, Wednesday, The Eucharistic Celebration will be at San Jose Church (Tinian) and San Vicente Church (Saipan) at 6:00 PM. Dinner will follow immediately at Gladyz M. Untalan's Residence in DanDan, Saipan.

Your presence, thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Thank You, Maraming Salamat Po and Un Dangkulo na Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

From: Gladyz M. Untalan (Wife) & Children

Oprah, schoolgirls to testify at defamation trial

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Oprah Winfrey and several schoolgirls allegedly abused at her academy in South Africa are expected to testify in a trial over a defamation lawsuit brought by the school's former headmistress, whose performance Winfrey criticized.

When news of the scandal broke in 2007, Winfrey said she had "lost confidence" in headmistress Nomvuyo Mzamane and was "cleaning house from top to bottom." Mzamane, who said she didn't know about any sexual abuse, had trouble finding another job afterward.

The case is headed for a two-week jury trial in federal court in Philadelphia starting March 29.

At a final pretrial hearing Friday, Winfrey lawyer Chip Babcock said minors do not typically testify in open court in South Africa. The girls, now 14 and 15, may seek to testify through videotaped depositions, especially given the sensitive nature of their testimony, Babcock said.

"We're going to see how the kids get acclimated here, and how (their) parents feel about things," Babcock told U.S. District Judge Eduardo Robreno.

A dorm matron at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls has been charged with abusing six students. Winfrey has called the allegations crushing given her own stated history of childhood sexual abuse.

Winfrey plans to defend her remarks about Mzamane on free speech and other grounds, arguing that she merely voiced her opinions. Mzamane's lawyers, who note Winfrey's huge media reach, contend listeners would think they were based on facts she gleaned from the school's internal investigation.

"To this day, Ms. Winfrey admits that she has no evidence that Ms. Mzamane knew about any claims of sexual abuse at the academy while she was headmistress there, much less that she tolerated or covered up such abuse," Mzamane's lawyers wrote in their trial memorandum.

Winfrey was not in court Friday, but as the named defendant must attend the trial each day. She has rearranged the taping of her Chicago-based daily TV talk show, according to her lawyers, who asked the judge to try to keep the trial from dragging beyond two weeks.

Robreno agreed to hold court on Saturdays if necessary. Several witnesses are coming from South Africa on visas linked to the trial schedule.

Mzamane, born in Lesotho, formerly worked at the private Germantown Friends School in Philadelphia, and was living in the city when she filed suit two years ago. She earned $150,000 a year as the head of Winfrey's academy.

Winfrey hopes to show that the school leader failed to act on myriad complaints about dorm matron Tiny Virginia Makopo, who is accused of sexually and physically abusing students. Makopo has pleaded not guilty to 14 charges.

Winfrey, in court papers, said she had planned to hire nurses to serve as dorm matrons for the 150 seventh- and eighth-grade girls who were selected from impoverished backgrounds to attend her school.

Mzamane instead hired eight young women from a local company called Party Design, she said.

"These young women were later found to be totally unqualified to handle the position, something Ms. Mzamane had been warned about," Winfrey's lawyers wrote.

As the school's inaugural year unfolded, Makopo attacked another dorm parent, injured three people while driving a golf cart after a champagne party at Mzamane's home and retaliated rather than apologize to girls who complained of mistreatment, while Mzamane did little or nothing, Winfrey's lawyers allege in their trial memo.

Forbes last year listed Winfrey's net worth at $2.7 billion. However, for trial purposes, lawyers have stipulated the amount at $1.2 billion.

The academy now serves about 330 girls.

In this Nov. 1, 2009 file photo, Oprah Winfrey arrives at the premiere of the film "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire," at AFI Fest 2009 in Los Angeles.

AP

Volunteer day promoted to honor Mister Rogers

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Mister Rogers cared deeply about his neighbors and his neighborhood, both in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe and in real life.

Now, friends and colleagues of late television icon Fred Rogers want to honor his legacy with a national day of volunteering on his birthday. Rogers, who died in 2003 after battling stomach cancer, would have been 82 on Saturday.

David Newell, who played Mr. McFeely on "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," said volunteering meant a lot to Rogers.

As a boy, Rogers volunteered at his hometown hospital in Latrobe, Pa., rolling bandages for soldiers during WWII. And, Newell said, public television, where Rogers' series began, relies on volunteers.

The idea for the Won't You Be My Neighbor? Day grew out of Sweater Day, which Family Communications Inc. of Pittsburgh has promoted over the past several years to honor Rogers. Rogers created the company to produce his show and other family friendly educational fare.

Of course, people still are encouraged to wear sweaters in Rogers' honor.

"The sweater is the touchstone to Fred," Newell said. The volunteer day is beginning this year in partnership with the United Way of Allegheny County, the county in which Pittsburgh is located and where the show was made.

"We're trying to establish this as a national event, but you've got to start small," Newell said. "It's really what Fred would want to happen. He wanted to help others."

Suggested volunteer ideas are simple acts, such as lending an ear to someone, offering to return a shopping cart or volunteering at a senior center. Around Pittsburgh, various museums and other institutions are offering free or reduced admissions to mark the day.

AP

A figure of the late Fred Rogers, host of the PBS children's television program "Mister Rogers Neighborhood", is positioned on the bench near one of the actual sweaters and shoes Rogers used in his television program after a photo shoot at the Heinz History Center before it is placed on exhibit at the museum in Pittsburgh, Friday, March 19, 2010.

While there always are opportunities to volunteer, a dedicated day helps reinvigorate volunteerism, said Tracey Reed Armant, manager of community outcomes for United Way of Allegheny County. The United Way also sees Won't You Be My Neighbor? Day as a way of recognizing people who volunteer.

Rogers' legacy also extends beyond cardigans and kindness: He's recognized as a pioneer in children's' educational television, and that work is still being carried on.

"I think that the really important thing about Fred Rogers is he took the cutting edge technology of his day, television, and he applied to it this wonderful philosophy and this strong set of wonderful educational values and created something that reached million of families all over the world and uplifted their lives," said Maxwell King, executive director of the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at St. Vincent College in Latrobe.

On Monday and Tuesday, the center is hosting the inaugural Fred Forward Conference, which will look at how emerging technologies and new media can be used in developmentally appropriate and educational ways for children.

"Now, there is so much technology and people are struggling to figure how to use it to uplift children," King said. "And Fred is a wonderful, powerful example that this can be done." While the day will come when children don't know who Mister Rogers was, King said the important thing is "that they understand and benefit from Fred's values and Fred's approach."

Ex-porn star reveals purported Tiger Woods texts

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A former porn actress says she may reveal more potentially embarrassing information about Tiger Woods after releasing sexually graphic text messages that she claims prove her affair with the golfer.

Joslyn James told The Associated Press on Thursday that she disclosed the messages because she wants people to realize that she was honest when she came forth earlier this year and said Woods had avidly pursued her.

"I just wanted the public to know and the truth to be out there for me to have people see what I was being told and not just judge me for being with a married guy," she said.

James

James posted more than 100 texts on her Web site Thursday, including some in which arrangements were made for her to meet with Woods at hotels where he was staying. Others stated a desire for rough sex, including messages dated Aug. 29 in which a person James says is Woods tells her he wants to slap her and that she should beg the next time he sees her.

James, whose real name is Veronica Siwik-Daniels, said she met Woods when she was working at a Las Vegas nightclub he frequented. She said he led her to believe she was the only woman in his life other than his wife.

"If I would have known everything that was going on, and wasn't being lied to, I would have done things differently," she said.

A request for comment from a Woods spokesman was not immediately returned.

She has saved more than 1,000 texts Woods sent her, James said, and plans to release more in the days ahead.

She posted the first batch just two days after Woods announced he was ending his four-month, self-imposed exile to play at the Masters at Augusta National in Georgia. They could be a distraction to golf's greatest player as he prepares for his comeback.

The final three texts James released Thursday were dated Oct. 4 and indicate the sender became enraged with her, apparently after their relationship was nearly discovered.

"Don't ... talk to me," the final one said. "You almost just ruined my whole life. If my agent and these guys would have seen you there ... "

She said the relationship didn't end, however, until several weeks later.

James is only posting messages she says are from Woods and none from herself to the golfer. She said that's because her cell phone quickly overwrites outgoing texts and she wasn't able to save them.

Lady Gaga fires back in NY court at music producer

In this Jan. 20, 2010 file photo, singer Lady Gaga performs in concert at Radio City Music Hall in New York.
AP

NEW YORK (AP)—Lady Gaga is firing back at a music producer who claims he launched her career and is suing her for $30.5 million.

Her lawyer said in a court filing made public Friday the agreement at the heart of the suit was "unlawful."

Song writer and music producer Rob Fusari filed the lawsuit Wednesday in Manhattan against the Grammy Award-winning performer. He said his protege and former girlfriend, whose real name is Stefani Germanotta, ditched him as her career soared.

The lawsuit said they co-wrote songs such as "Paparazzi" and "Beautiful, Dirty, Rich." Fusari also said he came up with her stage name and helped get her record deal.

According to the lawsuit, Lady Gaga and Fusari's relationship turned romantic and then became a business partnership in May 2006, when they created a joint venture called Team Love Child LLC to promote her career. Fusari's share was 20 percent.

But Lady Gaga lawyer Charles Ortner wrote in his response that the arrangement was "structured in such a way as to mask its true purpose—to provide to the defendants unlawful compensation for their services as unlicensed employment agents."

Ortner wrote that Fusari and his company violated statutes that prohibited them from "acting as employment agents without a license and charging Lady Gaga an unlawful fee for their purported services."

Fusari's lawyer, Robert S. Meloni, called the claim "ludicrous" in an e-mail to The Associated Press.

"Fusari is a PARTNER in the Team Love LLC with Gag and her father (through their company Mermaid)," Meloni wrote. "Rob was no more of an 'agent' for her than she is a Roman Catholic nun."

Ortner did not immediately respond to a phone message left at his office and an e-mail.

Lady Gaga won two Grammys in January: best dance recording, for "Poker Face," and best electronic/dance album, for "The Fame."

Demi Moore's Twitter account part of suicide help

CASSELBERRY, Fla. (AP)—Actresses Demi Moore and Nia Vardalos were linked to an online chain of Twitter posts that ultimately led to Florida authorities intervening Friday when an 18-year-old man threatened to commit suicide.

Moore's Twitter account, mrskutcher, was among those responding to a message from a young man threatening to hang himself in his front yard in Casselberry, north of Orlando. Moore—with more than 2.5 million followers—and husband Ashton Kutcher are both active on the social network.

Vardalos' eponymous account included a message that she had called a suicide hotline and been connected to Florida police. "I gave his name+city. They went to home, helped him," one message read.

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office said authorities received two calls around 2:30 a.m., one from California and one from Vancouver, British Columbia. Both callers reported the suicide threat on Twitter. There was no record of the callers' names, Lt. Sonia Pisano said.

Deputies went to a home and took the man to a hospital, Pisano said.

The teen's mother told the deputy responding that her son "was very emotional and diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder," according to a report released Friday by the sheriff's office. Her son was sitting at his computer desk crying when he told the officer he "did not know what to do with himself without help" and admitted to posting the tweet.

The man was then placed in protective custody.

A phone message left by The Associated Press at the home was not immediately returned.

Calls to representatives for Moore and for Vardalos, who starred in "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," went unanswered early Friday.

Moore's Twitter account was involved in a similar case last April, when a California woman messaged that she was going to kill herself. San Jose police said they took a woman to a hospital for "psychiatric evaluation" after someone called about a tweet sent to Moore threatening suicide.

AP
In a Sunday, March 7, 2010 file photo, Demi Moore arrives during the 82nd Academy Awards in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

Ellen presents $30K to Miss. lesbian in prom flap

JACKSON, Miss. (AP)—A lesbian high school student embroiled in a legal flap over her school's prom policy has received a $30,000 scholarship on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show."

Constance McMillen was speechless Friday when the talk show host pulled out an oversized check from the Web site Tonic.Com, a digital media company.

DeGeneres says she admires McMillen for challenging Itawamba County School District rules that would prevent her from escorting her girlfriend to the prom. The school district canceled the April 2 prom after McMillen's request.

A hearing is scheduled Monday in federal court in Aberdeen on American Civil Liberties Union efforts to force the district to hold the prom.

AP
In this photo released by Warner Bros, talk show host Ellen DeGeneres sits down with Constance McMillen, left, an 18-year old student from Fulton, Miss, whose prom was canceled after she asked to bring a same-sex date.

Earnhardt visits 'Handy Manny' prime-time special

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The children's animated TV series "Handy Manny Big Race" is going prime time Saturday night with Dale Earnhardt Jr.

NASCAR star Earnhardt voices the character of Chase Davis, who steps in to help Manny compete in the Wood Valley 500 auto race. The special, debuting at 7 p.m. EDT Saturday on the Disney Channel, stars Wilmer Valderrama as the voice of Manny.

Earnhardt says he decided to participate in "Handy Manny" because his 4-year-old niece is a fan of the show. The Disney Channel series is designed to teach preschoolers about working together and problem-solving.

The "Handy Manny" special also features a new song performed by Lance Bass, who voices the character of Elliot.

Husband's young crush leaves wife feeling flat

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Roger" —64 and retired—has a crush on a 25-year-old woman who lives in our small community and who runs a dress shop I frequent. Roger is usually quiet and reserved, but when he sees "Patti," he utters loud cries and runs to her side. He examines every detail of her clothing, makeup, etc., and takes her hand and compliments her on her soft skin, her ring or the color of her nail polish.

From the expression on her face and the looks she exchanges with the other women in the shop, it's clear she considers him a pest.

I have spoken up and said, "Patti must have a grandfather your age," or, "There's no fool like an old fool," but Roger ignores it. My concern is that he's making a fool of himself in public and, by extension, me. I'm so embarrassed, I can no longer walk into my favorite dress shop. Patti is popular. She has many dates and is not interested in Roger. I hate to be pitied by others. What can I do to stop this?

OLD FOOL'S WIFE IN ALABAMA

DEAR WIFE: Roger's "crush" is a reflection on him, not you, so keep your cool and please stop calling him an old fool. It's insulting and belittling, so of course he'll tune you out. Try this instead, "Roger, when you act the way you do when you're around Patti, it's embarrassing to me. That's why I prefer you no longer accompany me when I go there."

Then, when you shop for clothing, go without him. And instruct Patti and the saleswomen that if Roger drops by without you to tell him he's welcome—IF he's buying something for you. That way, instead of a problem, you'll have a windfall, and so will they. You can even leave a "wish list" with Patti in advance.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I was recently married, but we had to postpone our honeymoon for a couple of weeks due to weather and the loss of a sitter for my wife's daughter. The day after our wedding, my bride, "Brenda," informed me that we had a dinner date the following Monday with another married couple who are friends of hers. I gladly accepted, thinking it would be fun to go out and celebrate since our plans had fallen through.

The day before the dinner I was told that the husband (in the couple) had to work—so Brenda and his wife would go out to dinner and, if it was OK with me, I would stay home and baby-sit my new stepdaughter. I felt I had no say in the matter, and to keep things positive in this brand-new marriage, I agreed.

I have no problem with Brenda going out alone with her friend, but I did feel slighted. Shouldn't the dinner have been postponed until a time when we were all available? Or should I have accepted this "girls' night out" with more grace?

HONEYMOON-DEPRIVED IN KNOXVILLE

DEAR HONEYMOON-DEPRIVED: It depends upon how "graceless" your reaction was. While I don't blame you for feeling slighted, the dinner could have been rescheduled for when the husband was available, or you could have been included. I hope you told your wife how it made you feel because it may make her more sensitive to your feelings in the future.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I were out to dinner with two other couples who are also good friends. We all enjoyed a couple of bottles of wine during our meal.

When the check came, we split it three ways. However, one of the other couples insisted that we should tip only on the food portion of the bill. I said we should tip on the entire bill, including the cost of the wine. Who was correct?

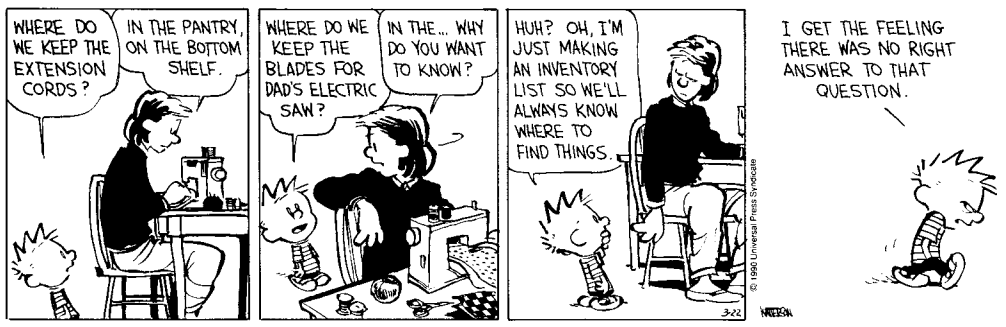
PROPERLY SERVED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEAR PROPERLY SERVED: You were. The tip should have been computed on the entire tab—and that includes the wine that you "all" enjoyed with your meals.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHERE DO WE KEEP THE EXTENSION CORDS?
IN THE PANTRY, ON THE BOTTOM SHELF.
WHERE DO WE KEEP THE BLADES FOR DAD'S ELECTRIC SAW?
IN THE... WHY DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
HUH? OH, I'M JUST MAKING AN INVENTORY LIST SO WE'LL ALWAYS KNOW WHERE TO FIND THINGS.
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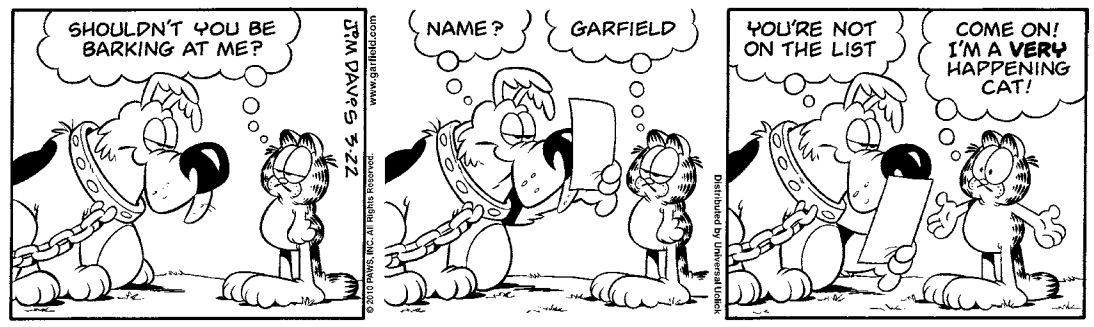
3-22
I GET THE FEELING THERE WAS NO RIGHT ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

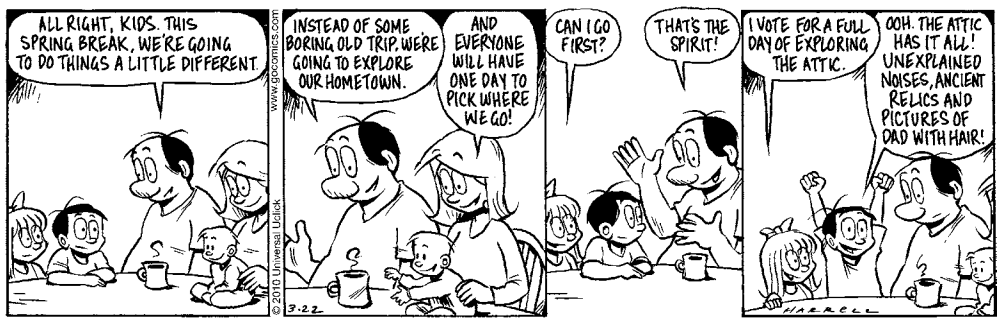
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


ALL RIGHT, KIDS. THIS SPRING BREAK, WE'RE GOING TO DO THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENT.
INSTEAD OF SOME BORING OLD TRIP, WE'RE GOING TO EXPLORE OUR HOMETOWN.
AND EVERYONE WILL HAVE ONE DAY TO PICK WHERE WE GO!
CAN I GO FIRST?
THAT'S THE SPIRIT!
I VOTE FOR A FULL DAY OF EXPLORING THE ATTIC.
OOH. THE ATTIC HAS IT ALL! UNEXPLAINED NOISES, ANCIENT RELICS AND PICTURES OF DAD WITH HAIR!
www.gocomics.com
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3-22

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

So, IF YOU USE YOUR EXERCISE MACHINE TO HANG ALL YOUR CLOTHES ON...
...WHERE DO YOU WORK OUT?
3-22-10
© 2010 Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Uclick
IN THE CLOSET. I DO CHIN-UPS ON THE CLOTHES RACK.
www.gocomics.com

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

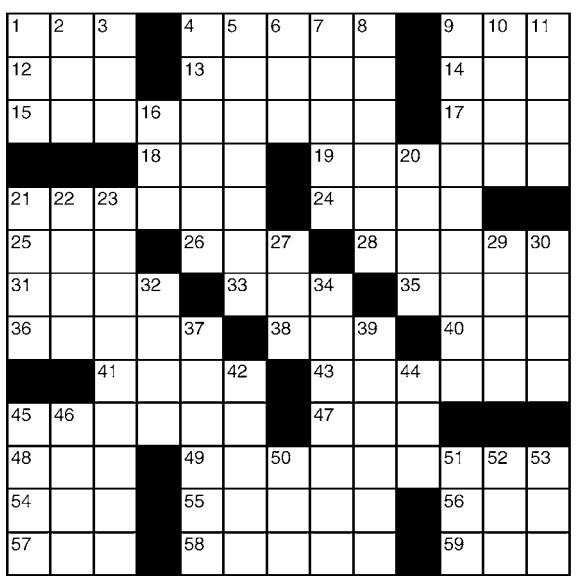
ACROSS
1 Switch position
4 Big name in early 1900s newsreels
9 Secret agent
12 Chum
13 "Ghosts" playwright
14 Sine — non
15 Wastes
17 Baseball arbiter
18 Brazilian city, familiarly
19 Upper-arm muscles
21 Standard usage
24 — gin fizz
25 Lawyer's abbr.
26 Fresh
28 Symbol of America
31 God (Latin)
33 "To be or — ..."
35 Abound
36 Figure of speech
38 Charlotte's creation
40 Water (Fr.)
41 Fox series about high school singers
43 Necklace features
45 Conestoga, e.g.
47 Cadence call syllable
48 Under the weather
49 Oak denizens
54 Payable
55 Good doctor
56 Pomeranian's perch, perhaps
57 Type squares
58 "Give me liberty ..." speaker
59 Biz deg.

DOWN
1 Chances, for short
2 Oft-read Web page
3 Winter ailment
4 Wing
5 Tummy
6 Mao — -tung
7 KFC additives
8 Store grain
9 Window wipers
10 Shoe style
11 Shrill barks
16 Illustrations
20 Outer attire
21 100 pesewas, in Ghana
22 Second-hand
23 Curlicues
27 "Holy mackerel!"
29 Jump
30 Ostriches' kin
32 Unaccompanied
34 More computer savvy
37 Honorable guy
39 Unclear
42 Suffix akin to "-ish"
44 Spring mo.
45 Broad
46 Astringent
50 Coffee vessel
51 Shade provider
52 Science workshop
53 Hot tub

Solution time: 24 mins.

A	I	D	■	P	L	O	W	■	S	T	A	R
J	O	E	■	L	A	M	A	■	W	A	N	E
A	W	L	■	I	S	I	S	■	A	C	N	E
R	A	I	S	E	S	T	H	E	R	O	O	F
■	■	■	P	R	O	■	D	A	M	■	■	■
H	O	U	R	S	■	G	A	T	■	A	L	A
E	A	S	Y	■	P	A	Y	■	B	R	A	D
P	R	E	■	F	I	G	■	C	O	M	B	O
■	■	■	J	O	G	■	S	H	O	■	■	■
L	O	W	E	R	S	T	H	E	B	O	O	M
A	R	I	A	■	K	Y	L	E	■	A	P	E
F	E	R	N	■	I	R	E	S	■	H	A	L
F	O	E	S	■	N	A	P	E	■	U	L	T

Saturday's answer 3-22



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Reese Witherspoon, 34; Elvis Stojko, 38; Matthew Modine, 51; Bob Costas, 58

Happy Birthday: Gain experience by traveling, educational courses, research and debates with your peers. Set your standards high and put your time, effort and energy into worthwhile projects that will bring you the returns you desire. Controversy will surround you but, the result of what you do and say will be much-needed reform. Your numbers are 5, 9, 18, 23, 27, 34, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Interact as much as you can with friends, peers and neighbors and you will accomplish some of your goals for change, reform and implementing new activities. Love is on the rise and will take you on an emotional but worthwhile detour. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Take care of business and do something nice to ensure that an old relationship you may have taken for granted is solid, secure and growing. Consider how you can cut back at home and make an effort to bank more. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Focus on friendships, sharing information and traveling about looking for items you need to further a project. Networking with people who have something to offer in return will make your job that much easier. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): If you are too sensitive, you will end up in an argument that can make you look bad. It's what you accomplish that will count. Don't let a personal matter cause you to overlook something that needs your attention. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): A sudden turn of events will give you the boost you've been waiting for. Good connections and informative discussions will provide you with an edge. Love is in the stars. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Taking something you do well and giving it a unique appeal will lead to profits. Uncertainty will be the enemy. Your help will be well received and will, in turn, bring you the support you need to follow your own goals. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): A change regarding your position or job may cause some uncertainty at first but, showing what you have to offer will help verify your talents. A problem at home won't go away without discussion and action. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take any opportunity you get to make changes to your home and routine. A move or property deal will bring benefits you may not be able to see at first. Change is heading your way and you must embrace it with open arms. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Productivity should lead to a better situation at home. A financial deal can turn things around for you if you don't spend unwisely. Love is on the rise and can lead to an entertaining evening if you aren't too pushy. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Slow down and you will avoid making a costly mistake. A problem with someone you are close to will leave you wondering what to do or say next. You'll get caught in the crossfire if you take sides or meddle. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): It's time to shake things up. If you look at your past, it will be easy to see what needs to be done. A new chance at love is apparent if you let your charm lead the way. You can achieve greater security and stability in your life with a little effort. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Avoid getting involved in a heated and very emotional discussion that will lead to personal indecisiveness. Consider the cost involved. You can gain some clout by using reverse psychology and your Pisces charm. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are a doer who welcomes a challenge and thrives on change. You are intelligent, aggressive and will not back down. You are a born leader.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	8			5			6	
9								1
2		3	6		4	8		5
		7		2		9		
5			8		7			2
		6		4		1		
6		1	7		9	2		3
4								6
	7			6			9	

Difficulty Level ★ 3/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

1	6	8	9	2	5	4	7	3
3	4	5	8	1	7	2	9	6
9	2	7	4	6	3	8	5	1
8	5	3	2	7	1	9	6	4
2	1	9	3	4	6	7	8	5
6	7	4	5	9	8	3	1	2
7	9	6	1	3	4	5	2	8
5	3	2	6	8	9	1	4	7
4	8	1	7	5	2	6	3	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 3/20

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SPIFFY SPOONS **Solution: 6 letters**

N	W	O	L	L	A	H	S	P	I	R	G	P	E	L
G	N	R	U	T	A	F	U	T	E	N	S	I	L	I
I	N	E	T	N	I	O	G	N	I	T	A	E	B	Q
S	S	I	D	N	S	O	E	X	E	R	S	C	A	U
E	D	L	G	O	E	D	I	C	E	H	O	E	T	I
D	E	E	P	G	O	M	L	O	N	G	C	N	T	D
(G)	R	O	U	P	I	W	A	O	I	U	U	T	L	S
S	(U)	I	H	O	L	D	I	N	F	V	O	H	I	L
Y	S	(L)	V	E	P	T	S	L	R	W	C	O	O	K
R	A	H	(P)	O	C	E	A	I	A	O	B	O	W	L
E	E	L	O	E	R	T	M	S	P	D	T	A	H	L
L	M	C	L	V	W	Y	H	E	T	P	L	R	S	E
T	S	L	I	A	E	Z	I	S	T	E	I	E	I	E
U	O	N	R	P	M	L	I	F	T	A	T	N	D	T
C	G	E	T	R	E	S	S	E	D	D	L	O	G	S

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 02-2010

Opening date: March 9, 2010 **Closing date: March 23, 2010**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) announces the following job vacancies:

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(1) General Maintenance-I (Tinian Seaport)

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Attorney for Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, Plaintiff, vs. JACQUELINE A. ATALIG, Defendant. — CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0183C — AMENDED SUMMONS

TO: THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT JACQUELINE A. ATALIG

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO APPEAR by the 21st day after the fourth date of publication of this AMENDED SUMMONS and defend the above entitled action in the CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, at the Office of Clerk of Court, CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, 1st Floor, Guma' Hustisia, Ilimwal Aweewe, House of Justice, Susupe Village, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan MP 96950-0307; and answer the complaint of the plaintiff Bank of Guam, and serve a copy of your answer upon **Robert Tenorio Torres**, attorney for Plaintiff Bank of Guam, at **Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya), P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950;** and in case of failure to do so, judgement will be rendered against you according to the demand of the COMPLAINT, which has been filed with the Clerk of Court.

So **ORDERED** this 4th day of March, 2010.

/s/ Clerk of Court

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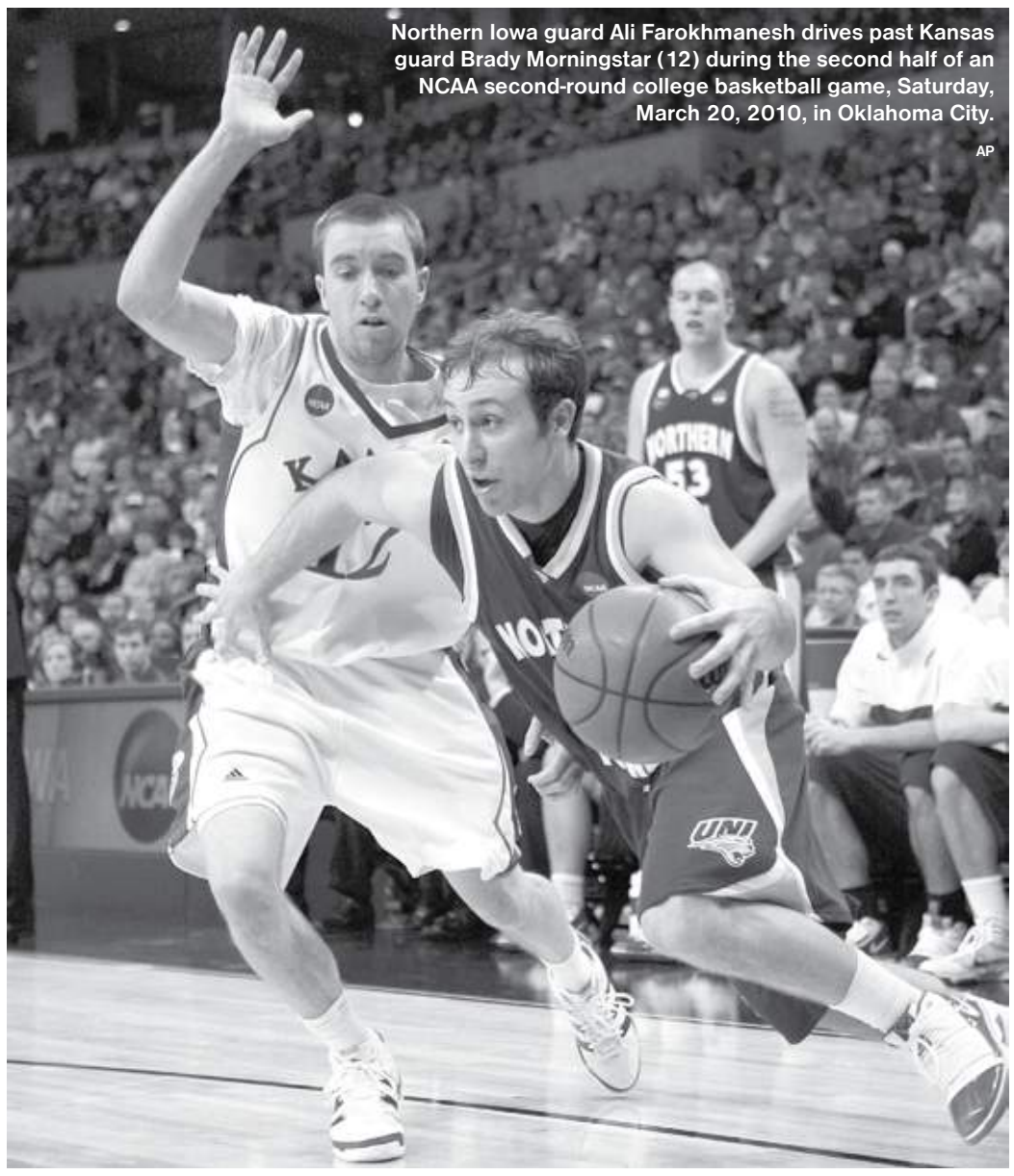

Northern Iowa guard Ali Farokhmanesh drives past Kansas guard Brady Morningstar (12) during the second half of an NCAA second-round college basketball game, Saturday, March 20, 2010, in Oklahoma City.

AP

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—Leading by one against the colossus of the bracket, Ali Farokhmanesh stood at the 3-point line, no one around. The prudent play? Pull it out, burn some clock.

Not a chance.

Taking his shot at history, Farokhmanesh let fly from the wing.

Swish!

The biggest upset in a tournament full of them was done. Northern Iowa had taken down mighty Kansas.

Playing with poise down the stretch and getting another big 3-pointer from Farokhmanesh, Northern Iowa pulled off one of the biggest NCAA upsets in years by knocking No. 1 overall seed Kansas from the bracket with a program-defining 69-67 win on Saturday.

"If anybody's going to shoot that shot, I want it to be Ali," Northern Iowa's Jake Koch said.

This year's NCAA tournament has been defined by its upsets. Eight double-digit seeds moved through the bracket in the first round. No. 10 Saint Mary's beat Villanova on Saturday and No. 11 Washington shoved aside New Mexico.

This was the biggest shocker of all.

Winning the tempo tug-of-war, ninth-seeded Northern Iowa (30-4) grounded the high-flying Jayhawks with in-their-jersey defense, then withstood a furious rally to become the first team to beat a No. 1 seed in the second round since UAB and Alabama did it to Kentucky and Stanford in 2004.

Farokhmanesh, Northern Iowa's first-round hero, had the biggest play of all.

With Kansas charging and its fans roaring, the fearless son of an Iranian Olympic volleyball player caught the ball on the wing after the Panthers had broken Kansas' press. The shot clock still in the 30s, he hesitated for just an instant, then cast his bracket-busting shot with 34 seconds left on the game clock.

Trailing 66-62, Kansas had one last chance, but Tyrel Reed was called for an offensive foul and Farokhmanesh sealed it with two free throws with 5 seconds left, sending the Panthers to the round of 16 for the first time.

Next up is the Michigan State-Maryland winner in St. Louis—and another chance at history.

"This team has done such a great job of turning the page to what's next, and this would be the biggest challenge of the year," Northern Iowa coach Ben Jacobson said. "A lot of positive things have happened because of the way these guys played.

Kansas (33-3) fell behind early and came up just short on one of its anticipated runs, ending a season that started with national-title aspirations on another disappointing NCAA loss to a mid-major.

The Jayhawks trailed by as many as 12 points and used defense to pull within one with 44 seconds left. But they let Farokhmanesh sneak behind them for the deciding 3 to go down for the mid-major count like they did to Bradley in 2006 and Bucknell the year before, also in Oklahoma City.

Cole Aldrich had 13 points and 10 rebounds, Marcus Morris added 16 points and Sherron Collins ended his stellar KU career with 10 points on 4-of-15 shooting.

"Obviously, everybody is disappointed on our team," Aldrich said. "To work so hard and to go through so much adversity ... it's disappointing that we couldn't have let Sherron go out in a better way."

The post-game celebration told the story.

Farokhmanesh, who finished with 16 points, jumped into a huddle of teammates, and Koch embraced older brother Adam to a chant of "U-N-I!" At the other end, Jayhawks Morris and redshirt senior Mario Little crumbled to the floor, tears streaming down their faces when they finally rose.

Yes, this was monumental.

"We never doubted we could play with them at all," senior Adam Koch said.

Kansas sneaked by Lehigh in the first round, using a spirit-crushing run to turn a scare into a 16-point win.

Northern Iowa had a fight all the way through its three-point win over UNLV in the opener, breaking a 20-year NCAA winless drought on Farokhmanesh's 25-footer with 4.9 seconds left.

This game was like opposite poles of two magnets; One of the nation's highest-scoring teams against Northern Iowa's stuck-in-the-mud mentality.

The Panthers faced the tougher task.

They had never played a No. 1-ranked team and no one from their conference had beaten one since 1962. UNI also seemed to be overmatched against KU's lineup of pros-in-waiting. When asked if any of their players could start for Kansas, Farokhmanesh and Adam Koch gave an uncomfortable laugh.

The thing about the Panthers is they know defensive positioning as well as any team in the country, moving in a symphonic dance of denial. Northern Iowa has become the most consistent team in its state, too, reaching the NCAA tournament five of the past seven years, good enough that Kansas coach Bill Self said there's no way Cinderella's shoe fits anymore.

He was right.

No. 6 Tennessee 83, No. 14 Ohio 68

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—J.P. Prince scored 18 points, and Brian Williams and Wayne Chism had 12 rebounds apiece to lead sixth-seeded Tennessee over No. 14 Ohio.

It's the third time in four years Bruce Pearl's Volunteers have reached the NCAA's second weekend. Tennessee (27-8) will play the winner of Sunday's Ohio State-Georgia Tech game in the round of 16.

Tommy Freeman scored 23 points for Ohio, which was the lowest seed to get out of the first round. But he got little help from Armon Bassett and freshman D.J. Cooper, the guards who starred in the first-round victory over third-seeded Georgetown. They combined for 23 points on 7-of-23 shooting against Tennessee.

The Bobcats (22-15) trailed by six midway through the second half before the Vols went on a 10-1 run to put it away.

SOUTH REGIONAL
No. 10 Saint Mary's 75, No. 2 Villanova 68

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—Omar Samhan was an unstoppable Gael force, and Saint Mary's earned a surprising spot in the NCAA tournament's round of 16.

Samhan played the game of his career on college basketball's biggest stage, finishing with 32 points and seven rebounds to lead 10th-seeded Saint Mary's past No. 2 Villanova and on to Houston for the South Regional semifinals.

Mickey McConnell stopped and fired an arcing 25-footer that banked high off the glass to give the Gaels (28-5) a 68-65 lead with 1:15 left.

Samhan used a two-handed block to turn back Reggie Redding, and McConnell made both ends of a 1-and-1 to make it 70-65.

Star guard Scottie Reynolds struggled again, and the Wildcats (25-8) made an early exit a year after they played in the Final Four. They started 20-1 and collapsed at the end.

No. 3 Baylor 76, No. 11 Old Dominion 68

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—With its first NCAA tournament victory in 60 years out of the way, Baylor has now earned an extended stay.

LaceDarius Dunn scored 26 points and the third-seeded Bears outlasted No. 11 Old Dominion in the second round of the South Regional.

Baylor squandered a 14-point first-half lead but went on a late 8-1 run to pull away. Now, the Bears (27-7) head back to their home state to play Saint Mary's in Houston in the round of 16.

Baylor struggled to beat Sam Houston State in the first round for its first NCAA tournament win since 1950, but the Bears arrived loose and confident against Old Dominion, taking a double-digit lead amid a barrage of early 3-pointers and alley-oops.

After the Monarchs (27-9) rallied to take the lead in the second half, Baylor received a big lift from 7-footer Josh Lomers, who tied a career high with 14 points, 12 in the second half.

WEST REGIONAL
No. 5 Butler 54, No. 13 Murray State 52

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—Murray State got awfully close to a second straight bracket-busting upset before Butler reminded the Racers which small school almost always plays big in March.

Ronald Nored's three-point play snapped a tie with 25.4 seconds left, and Butler narrowly evaded a second stunner by the 13th-seeded Racers in three days.

Nored scored 15 points and Gordon Hayward had 12 before making the decisive defensive play for the fifth-seeded Bulldogs (30-4), who extended the nation's longest winning streak to 22 games and advanced to the regional semifinals.

Butler reached to the round of 16 for the second time in four years—but only after surviving a thriller against the undersized but big-hearted Racers (31-5), who beat fourth-seeded Vanderbilt in the first round on a buzzer-beater.

In next week's West Regional semifinals in Salt Lake City, Butler will face the winner of top-seeded Syracuse's meeting with Gonzaga on Sunday.

No. 2 Kansas State 84, No. 7 BYU 72

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—Jacob Pullen scored 20 of his career-high 34 points in the first half to help dig No. 2 seed Kansas State out of an early 10-point hole, and the Wildcats turned away Jimmer Fredette and BYU in the second round.

Pullen came alive with a scoring flurry shortly after he and Fredette got tangled up in transition in the first half, and K-State (28-7) didn't trail again in earning its first appearance in the round of 16 since 1988.

Pullen surpassed 30 points for the third time in his career and helped seal the victory with a 3-pointer and six free throws down the stretch. Equally as important as his scoring was his physical defense against Fredette, who had scored 37 points to get the seventh-seeded Cougars (30-6) past Florida in double overtime in the first round.

Fredette finished with 21 points on 4-of-13 shooting.

Next up, the Wildcats face the winner of Sunday's game between third-seeded Pittsburgh and No. 6 Xavier.

EAST REGIONAL
No. 1 Kentucky 90, No. 9 Wake Forest 60

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Darius Miller scored a career-high 20 points and top-seeded Kentucky made easy work of No. 9 Wake Forest in the second round.

It was the second consecutive blowout for the Wildcats (34-2), who crushed East Tennessee State 100-71 in their opener.

Miller scored 16 points in the first half to help Kentucky build an early double-digit lead that ballooned beyond 30 in the second half. DeMarcus Cousins added 19 points, John Wall had 14 and Eric Bledsoe 13.

Al-Farouq Aminu led Wake Forest (20-11) with 16 points.

Kentucky moves on to play the winner of Sunday's game between 12th-seeded Cornell and No. 4 Wisconsin in the East Regional semifinals next week at Syracuse, N.Y.

No. 11 Washington 82, No. 3 New Mexico 64

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—Quincy Pondexter scored 18 points, Isaiah Thomas added 15 and 11th-seeded Washington extended its incredible late-season surge all the way to the regional semifinals with a second-round victory over New Mexico.

Matthew Bryan-Amaning had 15 points and nine rebounds for the Huskies (26-9), who have won nine straight, including the Pac-10 tournament and wins over two higher-seeded opponents in the East Regional at the Shark Tank.

Washington ran right past the third-seeded Lobos (30-5), who couldn't keep up with the break-neck pace and fell behind by 23 midway through the second half.

The Huskies advanced to face the winner of Sunday's West Virginia-Missouri game. Washington is in the round of 16 for the third time since 2005.

Dairese Gary matched his career high with 25 points for New Mexico, which had a 15-game winning streak and a No. 8 national ranking before losing the Mountain West tournament final last weekend.

Bucks end Nuggets'

7-game home winning streak

DENVER (AP)—Even with Andrew Bogut ineffective and in foul trouble, the Milwaukee Bucks secured their signature road victory, beating the Denver Nuggets 102-97 on Saturday night.

Carlos Delfino had 26 points, and John Salmons added 21 to make up for Bogut's off-night as the Bucks won even though they didn't reach their hotel until 3 a.m. following a double-overtime win at Sacramento.

The Nuggets fell to 14-2 at home when facing a team playing the second of back-to-back games. They had won seven straight games overall at home and were 30-5 at the Pepsi Center coming in.

Bogut, who averages 16.3 points and 10.4 rebounds, was limited to two points and three rebounds in 15 minutes.

Carmelo Anthony and Chauncey Billups each scored 29 points for Denver, but Anthony missed a series of shots in the final minutes when the Nuggets were desperately trying to catch up.

Despite a late night in California, the Bucks didn't look the least bit lethargic.

They stayed close all game and surged ahead 69-61 with 5 1/2 minutes left in the third quarter thanks to a 7-0 spurt that was highlighted by Brandon Jennings' running jumper.

The Nuggets closed the quarter on a 15-7 run to tie it up at 76, and they would have taken the lead into the fourth quarter if not for Chris Andersen missing his second slam dunk, this one a one-handed put-back that rattled out at the buzzer.

Salmons stepped back behind the line and swished a 3-pointer that broke a tie at 78, and the Bucks didn't trail again.

The Nuggets could have tied it at 93 with 2:40 left but J.R. Smith's 3-pointer rattled out.

After Anthony sank one of two free throws to pull Denver to 97-95 with 1:28 left, Ersan Ilyasova (14 points) was left open underneath the basket for an easy layup when the Nuggets trapped Jennings on the wing.

Anthony turned it over at the other end, and Kurt Thomas hit a free throw to give Milwaukee a 100-95 lead with 36 seconds left, and Salmons sank two foul shots with 14 seconds left to ice it.

The Nuggets took a 54-53 lead into the locker room thanks to two free throws by Billups with 1.9 seconds left after he had nailed a 3-pointer from the top of the key in which he scooped up an errant pass at his shoelaces and popped the net.

Anthony appeared to hurt his left wrist in a scramble for the rebound underneath the Bucks' basket late in the first quarter, then took himself out while grimacing. But he returned after a few minutes.

This was the seventh game Nuggets coach George Karl has skipped since announcing a month ago he had been diagnosed with throat cancer. Acting head coach Adrian Dantley fell to 5-2 in place of Karl.

AP

Milwaukee Bucks guard John Salmons, left, is fouled as he goes up for a shot by Denver Nuggets forward Chris Andersen in the fourth quarter of the Bucks' 102-97 victory in an NBA basketball game in Denver on Saturday, March 20, 2010.

Bulls 98, 76ers 84

At Philadelphia, Derrick Rose scored 23 points in his return from a a sprained left wrist as the Chicago Bulls snapped their losing streak at 10 games with a victory over the Philadelphia 76ers.

Kirk Hinrich added 17 points and 11 assists, Brad Miller had 16 points, and Hakim Warrick 13 for the Bulls, 2 1/2 games behind Toronto for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Marreese Speights had 17 points and 11 rebounds for Philadelphia. The 76ers have lost 12 of their last 14 games.

Raptors 100, Nets 90

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Chris Bosh scored 36 points as Toronto handed New Jersey its seventh straight loss and 13th in a row at home.

Jarrett Jack added 15 points for Raptors, 3-10 in its last 13 games. Devin Harris had 22 for New Jersey. At 7-62 with 13 games left, the Nets are in danger of breaking the NBA mark for single-season futility, set by Philadelphia (9-73) in 1972-73.

Heat 77, Bobcats 71

At Miami, Quentin Richardson scored all 18 of his points on 3-pointers and Michael Beasley added 16 points as Miami moved into sixth place in the Eastern Conference.

Dwyane Wade had 14 points on a poor shooting night, but made up for it with nine assists and five blocks to help Miami move a half-game ahead of Charlotte.

Stephen Jackson led Charlotte with 18 points.

Celtics 102, Mavericks 93

At Dallas, Paul Pierce scored 29 points, and Rajon Rondo added 20 points and 10 rebounds as Boston stretched its winning streak to four games.

Ray Allen had 21 points for the Celtics, beaten by the Mavericks 99-90 in Boston on Jan. 18 in their only other meeting this season. Dirk Nowitzki had 28 points, and Jason Terry added 18 to pace the Mavericks, 14-2 in their last 16 games.

Grizzlies 123, Warriors 107

At Memphis, Tennessee, Rudy Gay scored 25 points and O. J. Mayo added 21 to help Memphis hand Golden State its 13th consecutive road loss.

Zach Randolph finished with 20 points and 13 rebounds, and Darrell Arthur matched his career high with 16 points and had a season-best 13 rebounds.

Monta Ellis led Golden State with 28 points.

Jazz 106, Hornets 86

At Salt Lake City, Paul Millsap had 22 points and 15 rebounds, C.J. Miles scored 19 points, and Deron Williams added 17 points and 11 assists for Utah.

The Jazz pulled away with a 17-1 run at the end of the second quarter and led by 35 in the second half. Marcus Thornton led New Orleans with 19 points.

Furyk takes control in Tampa

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)—Jim Furyk has gone 58 tournaments over 32 months without winning on the PGA Tour. That doesn't make the final round of the Transitions Championship any more important than it would have been in good times.

"It's not really, 'I want to show you' or anything like that," Furyk said after shooting a 4-under 67 to open a three-shot lead. "It's more that I just want to win a golf tournament."

Furyk has heard one question—"What has kept you from winning?"—far too often since his victory in the 2007 Canadian Open. With a round as flawless as the spring weather in Florida, he put himself in great position to answer it. He made consecutive birdies early on the back nine, and kept bogeys off his card for his first 54-hole lead in nearly three years.

Pressure? No more than usual.

"It's not really a monkey-off-my-back perspective or 'Boy, I can't wait to not answer that question again,'" Furyk said. "It's just that I want to go out and win a golf tournament. That's what we play golf for. That's what I practice hard for. And I haven't been able to do that in over 2 1/2 years.

"It's disappointing, because I work pretty hard at it."

Furyk was at 11-under 202, with a strong group of contenders behind him.

Defending champion Retief Goosen birdied the last hole of a roller-coaster round that gave him a 1-under 70, part of four-way tie for second. The others at 8-under 205 were two past champions at Innisbrook—K.J. Choi (67) and Carl Pettersson (70)—and Bubba Watson, who has never won on tour. He scrambled for a 70.

Padraig Harrington, a three-time major champion who hasn't won since the 2008 PGA Championship, went 14 holes without a birdie to fall out of the lead, then dropped another shot on the 18th hole for a 72 that left him four shots behind.

None of them felt like they were out of it.

"It's obviously only one person, so that's not so bad," Harrington said. "I don't want to give Jim a four-shot lead over a four-round tournament, let alone one round. There's enough guys behind that somebody is going to shoot a good score and put some pressure on him. Hopefully it's me."

Furyk last had a 54-hole lead on the PGA Tour at Colonial in 2007, when he lost in a playoff to Rory Sabbatini.

There have been times when he let tournaments get away down the stretch, and times when he was beaten, such as the Memorial last year when he was three shots better than everyone in the field except one guy—Tiger Woods—who won by a shot.

Sunday might be his best chance.

The few times when Furyk made a mistake, such as missing the green on the par-3 fourth, he made up for it with his putting. Later in the warm afternoon, when he was giving himself so many birdie chances, he had to settle for par.

The turning point came early on the back nine.

Four players had at least a share of the lead at some point, and eight players were within range until Furyk hit a 3-wood just left of the green on the par-5 11th and chipped to 4 feet for birdie. On the next hole, he hit 7-iron to some 35 feet behind the flag, and poured in a long, slippery put that broke sharply to the cup.

Suddenly, he was three shots clear and his prospects were looking up.

Not so for Pettersson, who closed out the front nine with consecutive bogeys, or Steve Stricker, who was tied for the lead until hitting his tee shot in the water on the par-3 13th and scrambling for bogey. Stricker dropped another shot on a par 3 coming in for a 71, and wound up five shots behind.

Choi is a two-time winner in Tampa and feels as comfortable on the Copperhead course as any.

"I look at the tops of the trees to see the wind," Choi said. "You have to know, and it can get frustrating. You can lose it out here. This course will do that. That's why you see so many players who have won here before, because they know that."

Goosen also is a two-time winner, and while he didn't like up the course, playing bogey-free on the back nine didn't hurt.

The wild card is Watson, the big hitter who was a little too crooked but scrambled well to stay in the game. Watson hit one tee shot that didn't get beyond the forward tees on the par-3 eighth because it hit a tree. On the par-5 14th, his 3-wood into the wind wound up so far right of the green that players on the 15th tee had to back off the shot.

Sunday features an early start because of storms in the forecast for the afternoon.

Geoff Ogilvy is probably too far back to contend—he was seven shots behind—but the fact he is still playing is a story in itself. Thinking he was sure to miss the cut, Ogilvy boarded a plane for Arizona when he realized he might have a chance, but because the flight was about to depart, the former U.S. Open champion had to fly to Phoenix, then turn around and take a jet back to Tampa.

Playing on about one hour of sleep, he shot a 65 and was tied for 18th.

"It was worth coming back," he said.

GARDNER

From Page 28

Park (3:09:11), and Yun Ho Seo (3:10:13).

Swim leg booboo

Gardner ruled this year's Tagaman despite a 21st-placed finished in the swim leg after he timed in at 30:11.

"Those Koreans are great swimmers. It was a bit hard, as there were a lot of swimmers in Tagaman compared to XTERRA and it was still pretty dark," Gardner said.

With More than 20 pros eager to start the swim leg and 80 more others waiting in line, the first wave of swimmers jumped into the waters off Pacific Islands Club early.

Race director Bill Sakovich hit the horn, but it was not meant to kick off the race, but to call on the attention of swimmers to head to the right side of the shore. However, the first group thought otherwise and plunged into the pool. Kayakers had to stop swimmers, including Gardner and instructed participants to go back to the shore.

When the "real" swim leg began, Saipan's Kai Staal (25:37) and Shin Kimura (26:12) were first and second out of the water, followed by a bunch of tough and young Korean swimmers.

Gardner and company were in the fourth group to get out of the water with Vine leading the way with his time of 28:06.

Blistering speed in bike leg

Gardner made up for his slow start with a blazing speed in the exhausting bike leg that brought riders from the southern part of the island to the northern portion and then to the finish line at the American Memorial Park.

"I caught up with the Korean group and Mike at the traffic lights in Lower Base," said Gardner, who used his reliable Cannondale brand road bike for the longer race. "It helps that I brought my own bike, as some of the riders had to borrow what are available here."

Gardner posted 1:28:41 in the bike race, which was faster than his 1:30:07 time last year, and was enough to give him cushion going into the run leg from AMP to Oleai beach park and back.

By the time Gardner reached the bike-run transition area, he was already ahead of Vine by about four minutes, as the Canadian clocked in at 1:34:08 in the bike portion. Korean Ka On Cho was the third finisher in the bike, followed by Australian Jason Chalker, Yun Ho Seo, Byung Eun Jeon, Hiscott, Sang Hun Lee, and Seung Wan Chu.

Keep pace in run leg

Vine tried to catch up with Gardner in the run leg and the former did well with the day's best time of 56:07. However, Gardner kept his pace, clocking in at 58:29 to win the race. Hiscott, a road runner, posted the second fastest time in the run leg with his 57:22 en route to a third place finish overall. Chalker quit the race a few meters after starting the run leg, as he wanted to save himself for future races after clearly losing to Vine.

"I just tried to hang in there, as I know Mike will do everything to catch up. I was happy that I still had the legs," Gardner said.

Vine said he knows he can beat Gardner in the run leg, but he simply lost a lot of time in the bike portion.

"I will probably change my bike next time," Vine said.

Surprise win in women's race

People familiar with triathlon races on island was expecting Switzerland's Renata Bucher to be the first female finisher.

However, Korean national triathlon team member Dan Bi Hong surprised them and the favorites too, after completing the race in 3:20:47, more than three minutes ahead of American pro Shonny Vanlandingham (3:23:53) and Bucher (3:24:36).

"I was not expecting to win the race, as this was my first time to compete outside Korea. I was just trying to see how far can I go. It gave me pride to beat these world-class athletes," the 20-year-old Hong said through an interpreter.

Bucher, who won last year's Tagaman, was hat's off to Hong and the rest of the Korean contingents.

"They are a bunch of excellent swimmers and bikers. They are young and strong. I tried my best to catch up with them, but I simply did not have the fresh legs," said Bucher, who was nursing a cold before the race.

Hong was seventh out of the water at 27:07, 22nd out of 105 in the bike at 1:47:48, and ninth (first in women's) in the run leg at 1:04:09. By the time Bucher, Vanlandingham, and Saipan bet Mieko Carey started the run leg, Hong was already out of the AMP compound heading to Beach Road.

Carey ended up in fourth place in the women's pro division, followed by United Kingdom's Emma Ruth Smith, and Korea's Won Jeong Choi.

JOSHUA

From Page 28

and 50th overall, coming in after Matthew Mancao's time of 3:44:37. Manglona clocked in at 42:24 for the swim, 2:04:26 in the bike, and 1:16:53 in the run. This was better than his 2009 Tagaman overall time of 4:27:23. In 2009 Manglona timed in the swim at 47:29; the bike at 2:04:31; and the run at 1:30:06.

Manglona is hoping his Tagaman time will qualify him to be the CNMI representative to the 7th Micronesian Games to be held in Palau in August. The other male contenders for slots on the CNMI Team are Mancao, Lewie Tenorio, Butch Sublemente, Kieran Daly, Kevin Carey, Manny Sitchon, and Brad Ruszala. Only the Top 3 finishers in Tagaman will be chosen as members of the team and two will be named alternates.

Manglona is also using his performance in Tagaman to gain a slot to the Kaike triathlon in Japan in August.

Before the Tagaman, Manglona competed in the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship. His overall time was 4:18:10, which earned him a fourth place in his age division (20-24) and 37th place overall.

In the 15-km swim, Manglona timed in at 35:33; in the 30-km bike he timed in at 2:18:46; and in the 12-km run he timed in at 1:19:52. This year's XTERRA event is Manglona's third XTERRA triathlon.

His first time was the 2009 XTERRA Saipan Championship, which earned him an invitation from Dave "Big Kahuna" Nicholas to join the XTERRA World Championship in Makena, Maui, Hawaii.

Two weeks back, Manglona competed in the full Saipan Marathon, running 26.2 miles (42.195 kilometers) at 3:43:57, ranking second in his age division (20-29) and 19th overall in the men's division, besting his 2009 marathon time in January 2009.

Asked what motivated him to do all three events, which occurred during three successive Saturdays, Manglona said, "I did [the three events] because I wanted to push myself, my will and my limits."

Manglona reported no injuries except that he is feeling generally weak and tired, and needs rest. He also reported that the toes on his left foot are swollen and tender.

Getting ready for the events requires not only physical preparation.

"My workouts weren't specifically marathon training or triathlon training. I trained all the time to keep in shape in general. I don't think I prepared myself for these events, I just wanted to do them, and I did."

Manglona also said mental preparation is key. "Every morning of the race I would tell myself 'There's no turning back, just finish.' In Tagaman, I was in the running for the Micronesian Games and Kaike events, but they weren't my motivation. I just told myself, 'Do it.'"

Indeed Manglona did it all. He finished all three successive events while improving his time from previous years' competition times, a true record for a Sports Fest athlete. ***(PR)***

OL'ACES

From Page 28

in all seven innings, shut out Survivors in the first five inning before Jose Lizama Jr. reached home plate on a fielders' choice at the top of the sixth.

By the time Jose Lizama Jr. put Survivors in the scoreboard, Ol'Aces had already scored five runs. Jess Santos gave Ol'Aces their fourth run on Lancaster Secharmidal's sacrifice fly, while Camacho made it five off Survivors' error outfield.

A.J. Lizama preserved the lead and the win after allowing no hits and striking out Survivors' last batter at the top of the seventh. The best that Survivors could do in the last inning was reached third base on two wild pitches from A.J. Lizama. However, A.J. Lizama redeemed himself by striking out Vicente Cabrera Jr. for the third out.

Patriots 13, Athletics 3

In another Junior League game yesterday, the Docomo Patriots whipped the Athletics, 13-3.

The defending champion allowed the A's to score only in the first inning to nail an easy win.

After giving up three runs at the bottom of the opening inning, Pats starting pitcher Raymond Saralu recorded five straight strikeouts, foiling the A's attempt for an upset.

Henry Rabauliman relieved Saralu at the bottom of the third and the former got the job done, allowing no hits and striking out four.

On offense after the game was tied, 3-all, in the first inning, the Pats had a seven-run top of the second to break the match wide open.

SENIORS
Ol'Aces 12, D-9ers 2

In the lone Senior League game, Ol'Aces were also victorious, crushing D-9ers, 12-2.

Keoni Lizama stepped up to the plate in place of Ton Sablan at the top of the third inning and hit a two-run homer sparking Ol'Aces' run in that inning.

Prior to Lizama's round-tripper, Ol'Aces were trailing, 1-2. D-9ers scored their two runs at the bottom of the first inning on Zachary Aldan's one-run double and Peter Lieto's one-run single.

Jessie Yamagishi gave Ol'Aces their first run, blasting a single and driving Lamarc Iguel home at the top of the first inning.

Neither team scored in the second inning before Lizama homered and Ol'Aces scored seven runs in the third inning. Yamagishi was credited for two of those runs, as he made a double this time and brought Iguel and Leonard Sablan home.

Ol'Aces added four more runs in the next two innings and kept the lead when Iguel continued to perform well at the mound. Iguel after giving up two runs in the first inning, allowed no hits, struck out six, and had only two errors in the last four innings.

BANK

From Page 28

a 5-3 mark.

Bank of Guam led from start to finish, foiling Fiesta' repeated comeback bids behind the timely baskets of Peters and Quitugua and offensive rebounds of Coldeen.

Fiesta cut the lead to as low as three, 63-66, midway in the fourth quarter. However, Fiesta's reluctant defense or the lack of it allowed Peters to get inside, make a basket plus a foul, and widen the gap. After another Fiesta miss, Quitugua drove to the middle and canned a layup, bringing BoG's lead to eight, 71-63.

BoG entered the last two minutes ahead by 10 before back-to-back baskets from Elmer Esdrelon moved Fiesta within six, 71-77. In Bank of Guam's ensuing play, Pelisamen muffed a fastbreak layup, but Coldeen was there for the offensive rebound and a putback. Esdrelon quickly tried to retaliate, but missed his triple. Bank of Guam grabbed the rebound and Coldeen fed Pelisamen for an easy layup, securing the win for BoG, 81-71, with only 1:03 left on the clock.

Peters paced Bank of Guam with 23 points, making a living in the paint, as Fiesta was too soft on him, failing to push away the burly center out of his comfort zone. Quitugua chipped 20 markers, killing Fiesta with his side-stepping moves. Coldeen also finished in double figures, making 14 and collared 17 rebounds. Coldeen added four blocks to complete an all-around game.

BoG took the win despite having only six players available for the game.

Esdrelon paced Fiesta with 24 points. He had two more teammates—Roland Galang and Ferdie de la Torre—scoring in double figures, but their baskets came in long gaps. Fiesta's lax defense and predictable offense concentrated on Esdrelon allowed BoG to lead by as much as 15 points in the third quarter.

In the first game, Pepsi notched its first win since losing Bonbon Cadagat early this month after downing Cellular Pro, 74-71.

Alex Lauron carried the cudgels for Pepsi, making 31 points. He then drew help from Erlan Lansang and Jojo Garon, who contributed 21 and 13, respectively.

Pepsi, which now has a 2-3 record, seemed headed for another loss when it was held to six points in the first period and Cellular Pro took a 12-6 lead.

However, Lauron and Lansang teamed up in the second quarter combining for 21 points to grab the upper hand at the break, 33-30.

Pepsi hung in there, as Lauron and Lansang continued to pile up points and Garon got his offensive game going in the second half, scoring all his points in final 20 minutes of the match.

With the loss, Cellular Pro remained winless in six games.

First Game

Pepsi 74 – Lauron 31, Lansang 21, Garon 13, Reyes 5, Manganti 2, Maglaya 1, Obnimaga 1.

Cellular Pro 71 – Dulfo 23, Rotap 23, Hernandez 11, G. Loste 8, Manuel 4, Villanueva 2.

Scoring by quarters: 6-12. 33-30, 56-49, 74-71.

Second game

Bank of Guam 87 – Peters 23, Quitugua 20, Pelisamen 16, Coldeen 14, D. Palacios 9, G. Palacios 5.

Fiesta 76 – Esdrelon 24, Galag 11, de la Torre 11, Ong 9, Salazar 6, Carino 5, Valdez 4, Moran 4, Rabago 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-12, 37-27, 59-53, 87-76.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	45	24	.652	–
Toronto	34	34	.500	10 1/2
New York	25	44	.362	20
Philadelphia	24	46	.343	21 1/2
New Jersey	7	62	.101	38

Southeast Division

x-Orlando	49	21	.700	–
Atlanta	44	24	.647	4
Miami	36	34	.514	13
Charlotte	35	34	.507	13 1/2
Washington	21	46	.313	26 1/2

Central Division

y-Cleveland	55	15	.786	–
Milwaukee	38	30	.559	16
Chicago	32	37	.464	22 1/2
Detroit	23	46	.333	31 1/2
Indiana	23	46	.333	31 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	46	23	.667	–
San Antonio	41	26	.612	4
Memphis	37	33	.529	9 1/2
Houston	35	32	.522	10
New Orleans	33	38	.465	14

Northwest Division

Denver	47	23	.671	–
Utah	45	25	.643	2
Oklahoma City	42	25	.627	3 1/2
Portland	42	28	.600	5
Minnesota	14	56	.200	33

Pacific Division

x-L.A. Lakers	51	18	.739	–
Phoenix	43	26	.623	8
L.A. Clippers	26	43	.377	25
Sacramento	23	46	.333	28
Golden State	19	50	.275	32

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Chicago 98, Philadelphia 84
Toronto 100, New Jersey 90
Miami 77, Charlotte 71
Memphis 123, Golden State 107
Milwaukee 102, Denver 97
Utah 106, New Orleans 86
Boston 102, Dallas 93

LOCAL SCORES

SHIRLEY'S STANDINGS

MBI	7	0
World Resort	6	1
Aqua Resort	5	2
Fiesta Resort	5	3
Pacific Islands Club	4	2
Shirley's	4	3
AON/NJ Plus	3	3
Mobil	3	3
TBK	3	3
McGraw-Hill	2	3
Pepsi	2	3
Bank of Guam	2	4
Docomo/SGH	0	5
Hard Rock	0	5
Cell Pro	0	6

The Week in Sports

XTERRA Saipan tops it all

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

There were a lot of sports events held on Saipan last week, but the 2010 Saipan XTERRA Saipan Championship topped them all.

The No. 1 off-road triathlon race in the region attracted more than 100 triathletes here and from eight other countries.

At the end of the grueling 1.5-kilometer swim, 30-km bike race, and 12-km run, repeat winners emerged with United Kingdom's Sam Gardner getting his back-to-back XTERRA Saipan championship and Switzerland's Renata Bucher notching her sixth straight title.

Gardner completed the race in two hours, 34 minutes, and three seconds, shattering the 3:34:32 mark he posted when he won the 2009 XTERRA Championship.

The Windsor-native Gardner crossed the finish line at the American Memorial Park 43 seconds ahead of Canadian Mike Vine, who had his second straight bridesmaid finish this year. Rounding out the Top 6 in the men's division were Australia's Jason Chalker (2:48:19), Japan's Takahiro Ogasawara (2:57:46), and U.K's Michael Hiscott (3:06:20).

In the women's division, Bucher submitted 2:58:19 to beat four other pros: Shonny Vanlandingham (3:07:04), Mieko Carey (3:11:07), Emma Ruth Smith (3:14:47), and Darrelle Parker (3:39:23).

Despite XTERRA Saipan ruling the week, other events in the CNMI pushed through.

The NMIFA had their weekly men's and youth leagues, and the twice-a-week women's league, SLLB had its baseball games at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios and Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfields, the Shirley's caging at the JP Center Basketball Court, and the Chamolinian softball league at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

In the men's football league, MP United notched back-to-back shutout wins after crushing Young Guns, 8-0, at the Oleai Sports Complex Field. CNMI National team member Joe Miller knocked down five goals to lift MP United to a 2-0 record and an early lead in the eight-team league. During the opening of the league on March 7, MP United blanked. Matansa Football Club, 4-0. Other winners in Week 2 of the men's league were Korean Senior and Matansa, which downed Tan Holdings FC and Korean Junior, respectively.

In the youth league, Tan Holding swept its two games in the boys U14 division, while Matansa and MP United-Blue also prevailed in the boys division.

In SLLB, last week's winners circle include the Twins, Red Sox, JP Enforcers, and Little Falcons.

The biggest win in the Shirley's caging last week was the one Mobil posted, as it stunned Aqua Resort, 84-81. Mobil stole the match in the last 18 seconds of the game.

In the Chamolinian league, Natibu remained unbeaten in 13 games to keep its lead over the second-running Man Amigos (14-1).

Before the week ends, five Tsunami Saipan swimmers left the island to compete in the Japan Sprint. They were Kensuke Kimura, Angel Marie Tan, Angel De Jesus, Kaito Yanai, and Ryosei Toda.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Swimmers plunge into the waters off Micro Beach during the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Tsunami Saipan coach Hiro Kimura, fourth left, poses with his swimmers, Kensuke Kimura, Ryosei Toda, Kaito Yanai, and Angel De Jesus at the Francisco C. Ada Saipan International Airport before they depart for Japan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Twins catcher waits for the pitch during their game against the Braves in the Major League division of the SLLB last week at the Miguel "Tan Ge' Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Shonny Vanlandingham pedals up to Mt. Tapochao during the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mamiko Berger heads out to AMP compound for the run portion in the relay event during the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Paire's Connie Camacho, left, and Brianna Martin run after the ball during their game in the NMIFA women's league at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Korean Junior striker, left, and Matansa player battle for the ball during their game in the NMIFA men's league last week at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Northern Iowa stuns No. 1 Kansas

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

80 days to go

SOUTH AFRICA 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP

Gardner gets much-wanted Tagaman win

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Sam Gardner is going back to United Kingdom with mission accomplished, following his record-breaking win in the 2010 Tagaman Triathlon on Saturday.

Gardner was runner-up to Japanese road racer Masauki Matsumaru last year, but this time finished on top of a very competitive field, completing the grueling 2-kilometer swim, 60-k, bike, and 15-km run in two hours, 59 minutes, and 23 seconds. The British triathlete's time in the weekend race was faster than his 2009 record of 3:01:50 and Matsumaru's wining mark of 2:59:41.

"Finally, I can rest now, as I got what I wanted," said Garner, who was talking of his Tagaman win.

The 33-year-old Windsor native was a repeat winner in the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship and right after his title defense in the off-road race, he said his next target was the Tagaman.

"Coming here for the third straight time was special because I did not only get to win XTERRA for two straight times, but also the Tagaman. Winning these two races was my goal," Gardner said.

The United Kingdom triathlete finished ahead of rival Mike Vine (3:00:10) of Canada, compatriot Michael Hiscott (3:06:55), and Korea's Byung Eun Jeon (3:07:13), In Gyu

See GARDNER on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Sam Gardner reacts after crossing the finish line at the 2010 Tagaman Triathlon first, beating Mike Vine and a bunch of tough Korean triathletes during Saturday's race.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Dan Bi Hong nears the finish line to win the women's division of the 2010 Tagaman Triathlon on Saturday.

Joshua conquers March trifecta

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Joshua Manglona shows his muscles before the start of the swim leg of the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

While the Sportsfest's much-coveted PIC Double awards were vied for, there is one more award that was not handed out. It wasn't handed out because no one thought it was humanly possible. But one athlete did it all.

Joshua A. Manglona of Tinian completed all three of the sporting events for March—the Saipan Marathon, XTERRA Saipan Championship, and the Tagaman Triathlon.

At 21, Manglona is considered the most recent athlete on the local triathlon scene, but also one of the most promising.

In the 2010 Tagaman Triathlon, Manglona timed in at 4:09:18 in the 2-kilometer swim, 60-km bike, and 15-km run event and came in second in his age division (24 and under)

See JOSHUA on Page 26

Ol'Aces edge Survivors

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Ol'Aces won a low-scoring game, topping Survivors, 5-2, in the Junior League division of the 2010 Saipan Little League Baseball yesterday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Shortstop Frankie Camacho went 3-for-4 bat, including a two-run single at the bottom of the first inning that gave Ol'Aces a lead to protect in the last five innings.

Ol'Aces took a 3-0 advantage after one complete inning, following a run from leadoff batter Shane Deleon Guerrero.

The eventual winners and pitcher A.J. Lizama, who was steady on the mound

See OL'ACES on Page 26

Ol'Aces' Jonah Flores makes an empty swing during the bottom of the sixth inning of their game against Survivors in Junior League yesterday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Bank of Guam stuns Fiesta; Pepsi prevails

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Bank of Guam was right on the money Friday night, outclassing Fiesta Resort & Spa, 87-76, during their game in the 2nd Annual Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball at the JP Center Basketball Court.

BoG cashed in on Charlie Peters, Jeff Quitugua, and Bobby Coldeen to pull off an upset over Fiesta and improve the team's record to 2-4. Fiesta dropped to

See BANK on Page 26

Bank of Guam's Charlie Peters pulls up for a shot, while Fiesta defenders look on during their game in the Shirley's caging on Friday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO